

Rao wins confidence vote

NEW DELHI (AP) — Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao Wednesday survived a no-confidence motion in parliament that accused him of corruption and incompetence. It was the third no-confidence motion. Mr. Rao's minority government has defeated since it came to power in June 1991. The victory means Mr. Rao, 72, can continue opening India's closed economy and banishing the Hindu extremist who have sparked Hindu-Muslim violence that has killed 3,000 people since 1990. "This is the time to keep our heads cool and concentrate on development," Mr. Rao told legislators in a speech just before the voting took place in Lok Sabha, the lower house of parliament. The vote was 265-251. Eight members abstained. Mr. Rao says he will propose a constitutional amendment that would allow parliament to ban parties or groups that promote religious hatred. Winning candidates who used religious symbols or topics in their campaigns would not be allowed to sit in federal or state legislatures. The legislation is clearly aimed at the Bharatiya Janata Party, parliament's largest opposition group and Mr. Rao's archenemy.

Jordan Times

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'Chemicals used in Sarajevo attack'

SARAJEVO (R) — Serb besiegers were accused by Sarajevo radio on Wednesday of using chemical agents in one of the most intensive attacks of the war. "Never before has so much steel, lead, chemical agents and all kinds of forbidden lethal agents fallen on such a small space," the radio said. A U.N. spokesman said that during Tuesday's fighting shells had been fired that appeared to contain riot-control gas but there was no evidence any side was using poison gas. The deputy chief of the U.N. Protection Force, Cedric Thornberry, told a news conference in Belgrade that some of the shells fired at Zelj hill outside Sarajevo on Tuesday had given off "large white clouds." He added: We certainly observed a new kind of impact yesterday but need ourselves to investigate what was different about the shells and their contents and see who fired them. In Geneva, Bosnia's Muslim President Alija Izetbegovic met his Serb and Croat adversaries as part of "last chance" negotiations on the post-war division of the republic. (See page 8)

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Israeli strikes displace 500,000 At least 80 killed; Rabin vows to empty all S. Lebanon villages

Combined agency dispatches

A HALF MILLION civilians fled towards Beirut's teeming slums as Israel's jets, warships and guns blasted southern Lebanon for a fourth day Wednesday, creating ghost towns and smashed villages.

Known Lebanese casualties climbed to 84 dead and 382 wounded, police said.

Israeli leaders said Lebanese could live in peace along the border only when the Lebanese government and its Syrian backers stopped resistance fighters from attacking Israeli troops in their self-declared southern Lebanon "security zone."

The Lebanese government warned that the massive exodus of southerners since Sunday could cause large-scale health, hygiene and housing problems.

The government was trying to organise temporary shelters in schools, a spokesman said.

Many of the terrified Lebanese and Palestinians who fled the inferno in South Lebanon with few belongings turned to the Iranian-funded Hezbollah for shelter and food.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin vowed to continue "mercilessly" the air and artillery bombardment of Hezbollah and Palestinian targets until Katyusha

rocketing of northern Israel ceases.

"We are determined to strike the Hezbollah mercilessly, wherever they are, and that is why we are pushing the Lebanese population northwards. Lebanese civilians will only be able to return to their homes when the firing stops," he told parliament.

Mr. Rabin ruled out compromise and said the options were open.

The army spokesman said Israeli artillery, relentlessly pounding targets to the north, had fired 13,000 shells since Israel launched the offensive Sunday. Air strikes resumed at dawn.

Mr. Rabin spoke after Israeli army radio said a cabinet meeting heard "reports of great satisfaction" by the army on the flight from Lebanon.

Army radio announced a pause in shelling in parts of South Lebanon to allow more civilians to flee. Similar warnings were given by a radio station inside the "security zone."

The army said 70 Lebanese villages were under attack, with 20 added as targets Tuesday when Mr. Rabin formally declared his goal of causing a mass exodus from the south.

Israeli helicopters and warplanes staged 47 raids before

nightfall while artillery gunners unleashed about 3,500 shells, security officials said.

They pounded targets around the southern ports of Tyre and Sidon, killing seven people in an attack on two basement shelters and wounding dozens of others.

"This time they (Israelis) are systematically aiming at houses to destroy them, Rabin is a monster," said Ali Mohammad, a father of five who fled the southern village of Shaqra.

Retaliatory rocketing by Hezbollah with more than 160 Katyushas since Sunday has left three Israelis dead and injured 32. At least three salvos were fired Wednesday but caused no casualties.

Israeli officials said 70 per cent of the 23,000 people in the main border settlement of Kiryat Shmona, a favorite rocket target, had moved deeper into Israel out of Katyusha range.

Three Israelis, including a soldier killed inside Lebanon, died in the first three days of the fighting but there were no serious civilian injuries since Sunday.

The Israeli army estimated Lebanese deaths at 100 to 110, of whom 60 were civilians.

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Axiety and uncertainty amid exodus, page 2



Families crammed in a pick-up truck Wednesday leave their village of Baroureyeh to escape the Israeli air raids in South Lebanon (AFP photo)

Arab League calls urgent meeting

Combined agency dispatches

CAIRO — The Arab League Wednesday scheduled an emergency meeting Friday in Damascus on Israel's severest assault on Southern Lebanon since its invasion in 1982.

More than 80 people are known to have been killed and more than 400 wounded in four days of air, artillery and naval attacks.

The emergency ministerial meeting of the 21-member Arab League was scheduled at the request of both Lebanon and Egypt, league spokesman Talaat Hamed said.

On Sunday, the Arab League condemned the Israeli action and urged immediate implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 425, which calls for Israel to withdraw from south Lebanon.

Libya condemned the Israeli attacks against Lebanon and called on the United Nations to implement its Security Council resolutions on Israel "to prevent it from violating continuously the sanctity of the Lebanese territory."

Two other Maghreb countries, Morocco and Algeria, denounced the Israeli attacks and urged the Security Council to take action to

balt them immediately.

Algeria it urged the Security Council to "take steps to halt this dangerous situation immediately."

France Wednesday called on Israel to halt its attacks in Lebanon and said the U.N. Security Council was expected to take a public stance on the violence later in the day.

"It (France) warns Israeli authorities against the consequences of this situation both on the stability of Lebanon and on the peace process which risks being compromised," foreign ministry spokesman Richard Duque told reporters.

"At a moment when the toll of innocent victims is increasing seriously, and when the massive exodus of civilians is of a nature to trouble the reconstruction effort of the Lebanese government, France expresses its strongest worry in the face of continuing Israeli raids in Lebanon and demands that they stop."

But Mr. Duque added that France "again underlined the responsibility of armed militias in the escalation of violence."

Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharqi said the Israeli attacks on Lebanon could torpedo the Middle East peace pro-

cess.

In an interview published in the French daily newspaper Libération, Mr. Sharqi was asked whether Syria planned to turn its back on the peace process.

He replied: "This will depend both on how the situation evolves, on public opinion in Syria and Lebanon and on the response of the United States as co-sponsor."

He added: "We are not ready to pursue these negotiations under the threat of Israeli cannons."

This recent aggression against Lebanon, we believe, torpedo the whole process. It is becoming clear to the international community that Israel does not want peace, whoever is in power," Mr. Sharqi said.

The European Community (EC) called for an end to Israel's military operations in Lebanon and to attacks against Israel from Lebanese territory.

In a statement issued in Brussels, the 12 EC countries called for "an immediate stop to all such actions directed against the sovereignty of Lebanon, its territorial integrity and its independence, and which threaten the peace process."

The statement went on: "The

all too long years of violence and conflict have shown that the use of force and recourse to violence have brought neither a solution nor the prospect of peace for any of the parties involved."

The EC called on all parties to show restraint and to pursue intensively the peace process negotiations, which have reached a crucial phase."

The U.S.-based human rights group Middle East Watch condemned both sides in the conflict in Lebanon for deliberately targeting civilians.

Israel and guerrillas were "violating long-established rules of war," the group charged in a statement calling for an immediate halt to attacks on civilians.

Pakistan said its government and people are "deeply" anguished by the Israeli bombardments in southern Lebanon, a foreign ministry spokesman said.

These attacks are a flagrant violation of international law, the United Nations Charter and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon," the spokesman said in a statement.

In Damascus, visiting Russian diplomat Viktor Posuvalyuk met

(Continued on page 10)

Political parties agree on need to change Election Law but little else

By Ayman Al Safadi

Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The agreement reached Tuesday by 15 political parties on the need for "more democratic and modern" Election Law reflected a consensus on demanding fundamental amendments to the legislation but did little to solve the controversy over when and how the changes should be introduced.

Just as Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali gave the strongest indication that his government is moving towards changing the legislation, the country's major political parties sent him a message saying that they agree the law should be reconsidered.

But agreeing on the need for change is the only positive response Dr. Majali received from opponents of amendments, including signatories to the letter.

In the letter, sent to Dr. Majali Tuesday, the political parties said the law "requires reconsideration" through a national dialogue but stressed that no changes should be introduced without the approval of

Parliament.

The changes proposed in the letter include lowering the voting age from 19 to 18, increasing the number of seats at the Lower House, cancelling the quota system for minorities and "redrawing the voting constituencies to ensure equality among all citizens."

The parties also asked for facilitating the voting process, allowing more time for election campaign, bolding the ballots under the supervision of judicial committees and cancelling Item E of Article 18 of the law, which bars members of illegal political parties from contesting the ballots.

By pointing to the need for these changes in the law and insisting on a thorough national dialogue before introducing them, opponents of change appear to be playing for time. They aim to prove that there is little time left for discussing the changes if the elections are to be held within their constitutional time.

And by saying that no amendments should be adopted without the agreement of the House, they are calling for holding the coming ballots

under the current law, leaving it to the next Parliament to debate the changes.

Opponents who signed the letter are betting that time is running out," Mobaarak Shraideh, spokesman for the centrist Al Ahd Party, told the Jordan Times Wednesday.

Parties opposed to the change indirectly agree.

There is only time to mess with the law. You cannot thoroughly assess the changes or have a comprehensive dialogue before the elections are held," said Muslim Brotherhood deputy and leading member of the Islamic Action Front (IAF) Hammam Sa'id.

Even though both Al Ahd and the IAF signed the letter, which was drafted after a meeting organised by the Arab Organisation for Human Rights' Jordan Chapter last week, the two parties differ on the mechanism for the change and who is constitutionally entitled to change the law.

Al Ahd believes that there is enough time for affecting the agreed-upon changes before November, when the ballots are expected to be held, and

the government has the constitutional right to unilaterally amend the law while the IAF says any change outside Parliament is unconstitutional.

What the two sides agree on however is that Dr. Majali's statement to Salt notables Tuesday that the Election Law "has many gaps in it" is a clear sign that the change is imminent.

In addition to referring to loopholes in the law, Dr. Majali said the national dialogue which His Majesty King Hussein has called for has been going on in the media.

In an interview with the London-based Arabic daily Al Hayat, published Wednesday, King Hussein said the issue of amending the law would be presented to the people "and the suitable decision which will serve democracy will" be taken.

"... before I left Jordan (for London on July 9) I left people the opportunity to discuss the issue among themselves, and when I return (to Jordan) I will handle the subject as necessary and a date for the elections would be decided and

announced," the King said.

Dr. Sa'id said the dialogue taking place in the press is not the right forum for debating the law.

I am not aware of any formal dialogue on the subject, unless one is taking place behind closed doors," he said.

King Hussein has said that the dialogue for amending the law would be similar to the one held when the National Charter was adopted in 1990.

The government is just continuing its policy of confusing the people and issuing vague statements," said Dr. Sa'id, urging the government to announce a "final and defined position on (the law) and as soon as possible," as demanded by the letter.

Other signatories to the letter sent to Dr. Majali said that no one should object to the change in the law if it aims at ensuring democratic gains, but the IAF believes that "undermining the authority of the House will only hurt democracy."

"We insist that no changes are introduced without the approval of the House. Any other mechanism will be a flagrant infringement on the legislature even if it produces what

we require," said Dr. Sa'id.

Any changes in the law, however, are expected to include amendments that the IAF opposes, mainly introducing the one-person-one-vote formula which many observers believe would weaken large and well-organised political groups.

Under the current law, voters have many votes at the number of seats allocated for their constituencies and that allowed large groups, especially the Brotherhood, which was the only party that contested the 1989 elections under party lists, to strike alliance with independent and tribal candidates.

Other signatories to the letter sent to Dr. Majali said that the Jordanian Socialist Arab Ba'ath Party, the Popular Unity Party, the Arab Democratic Party, the Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party, the Democratic Arab Islamist Movement Party, the Freedom Party, the Jordanian People Democratic Party, Al Mustaqbal Party, the Jordanian National Alliance Party, the Jordanian Democratic Progressive Party, the Justice and Progress Party and the Democratic Arab Unionist Party.

Princess Basma said the concerned development plans had concentrated on the human dimension in the comprehensive development process and gave prominence to the need to activate public participation through supporting non-governmental organisations, improving the level of their performance and expanding their role.

She said changes witnessed in the Middle East region and their repercussions on Jordan prevented achieving the targeted growth rates, thus raising unemployment and hindering progress in women's issues in social, health, educational and other fields.

The Crown Prince expressed hope that structure of the U.N. organisations would be revised and the U.N. Economic Council's role would be activated.

He also voiced hope that the Arab countries would make their voice heard at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and stressed the importance of developing human resources.

"Human beings are not a means to development, but the goal of any development process regardless of age or sex," he said.

The Crown Prince also reiterated calls for establishing an international fund of Zakat (alms for the poor) and dwelt on the comprehensive security concept "which requires from all of us to reduce disparities between the rich and the poor."

He said the Islamic-Christian dialogue focuses on the principle of tolerance, paying special attention to the suffering of the Iraqi children and the situation in Somalia.

He pointed out that 80 per cent of the world's refugees are Muslims and still "we are every day faced with accusations against Muslims of fundamentalism and extremism."

Her Royal Highness Princess Basma delivered an address at the meeting, highlighting the focus by UNDP's report on democracy and public participation in the decision-making process.

She said it was a source of pride

(Continued on page 10)

To Al Ra'i and Jordan Times readers

Home-delivery service in Khalda and Tla'a Al Ali. Al Ra'i and the Jordan Times will soon start operating a new home-delivery service in the areas of: Tla'a Al Ali, Khalda, Umm Al Summaq, Wasfi Al Tel Street, Mecca Street and the Seventh Circle. Those who want to subscribe to the service, please call the Distribution Department; Tel: 667171, (Ext. 247).

Middle East News

JORDAN TIMES, THURSDAY-FRIDAY, JULY 29-30, 1993

Lebanon violence complicates peace efforts

By Carol Giacomo
Reuter

WASHINGTON — President Bill Clinton's decision to summon his secretary of state home from Asia for consultations underscores how Middle East violence is again complicating U.S. efforts to advance Arab-Israeli peace talks.

The 20-month-old negotiations are stalled and there are fears the whole process could unravel, although experts discount prospects of a wider war as Syria has hinted.

Total collapse of the talks would exacerbate regional instability and would tarnish immeasurably Mr. Clinton's foreign policy record.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who was originally set to head to the Middle East after meetings in Singapore and Australia, said Tuesday the Australia segment had been scrapped and he would be back in Washington Wednesday.

Mr. Clinton told reporters

he summoned the secretary home "because I want to talk with him about the Middle East before we go there." Assistant Secretary of State Edward Djerejian told Congress the gesture "reflects the gravity with which the administration views the outbreak of hostilities."

Mr. Christopher by all accounts intends to go forward with his second peace mission to the region later this week.

"The U.S. remains determined to advance the peace process and will not be deterred by those extremist groups who violently oppose peace," Mr. Djerejian told a congressional sub-committee.

But U.S. officials fear the recent fighting in South Lebanon — involving punishing Israeli air and artillery strikes in response to cross-border attacks by the pro-Iranian Hezbollah group — could divert attention from the main goal.

"Our concern is that he's not going there to negotiate a ceasefire between Hezbollah and

Israel but to stay focused on the peace process," a senior U.S. official told Reuters.

"The first thing on the agenda is and remains the peace process and moving the parties forward in their dialogue," said the official who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Middle East expert Geoffrey Kemp of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace says that like it or not, Mr. Christopher will have to adjust his agenda.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Before the upsurge in fighting, Mr. Christopher "would have spent 100 per cent of his time on the peace process. Now, he will have to spend 50 per cent of his time putting out fires and 50 per cent on the peace process," Mr. Kemp said in an interview.

"That's regrettable but I don't think it's disastrous."

Mr. Kemp said the violence

is not markedly different from that faced on many Mideast trips by James Baker, the secretary of state who launched the peace talks between Israel, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the Palestinians in October 1991.

In fact, Mr. Kemp said, because the violence is jumbled in South Lebanon and involved Hezbollah, which opposed peace talks from the start, it should be less problematic.

"Had the violence been in (Israel-occupied) Gaza or the West Bank or Jerusalem it would have been very serious" because it would have involved Palestinians who are central to the negotiations, he said.

"But the fact that primarily it has to do with groups that don't want a peace process (like Hezbollah) makes it easier to isolate it from the peace process," he said.

The administration, while calling for maximum restraint from all sides in the fighting, pointedly did not criticise Israel, its closest Mideast ally.

Officials have repeatedly blamed Hezbollah for trying to undermine peace efforts.

Mr. Clinton, in an unusual gesture on Tuesday, praised Syria, which has 30,000 troops in Lebanon and is the main power broker in the area, for "commendable restraint" in the face of intensified fighting that killed three of its soldiers.

Mr. Kemp accused Mr. Clinton of lauding Syria, which is crucial to Mideast peace talks, "for purely political reasons."

"He knows as well as everybody else their hand is involved in these attacks ... Hezbollah couldn't conduct these operations unless the Syrians permitted it," Mr. Kemp said.

Despite the obvious cloud hanging over the peace process, Mr. Djerejian said the administration remained convinced of the commitment of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Syrian President Hafez Al-Assad to negotiate peace and still believed there are "real possibilities for breakthroughs in 1993."

Hrawi moves to renovated palace

BEIRUT (AP) — President Elias Hrawi Wednesday moved into the rebuilt presidential palace in suburban Baabda, which had been destroyed in the final throes of Lebanon's 1975-1990 civil war.

Ironically, the president moved into the hilltop palace as hundreds of thousands of people fled their homes in South Lebanon battered by four days of Israeli attacks.

Mr. Hrawi said in a speech that "my heart is bleeding for the thousands upon thousands of South Lebanon's inhabitants who have become homeless as a result of Israel's barbaric attacks on their towns and villages."

He appealed for pan-Arab emergency aid to help ease the plight of the refugees from the south, condemning Israeli attacks as a "brutal offensive aimed at destroying the whole of Lebanon."

The Baabda Palace eight kilometres east of Beirut, has been the traditional residence of Lebanon's heads of state since the country's 1943 independence from France.

It sustained severe damage during various rounds of civil war fighting and was destroyed when rebel General Michel Aoun was evicted by Lebanese and Syrian troops Oct. 13, 1990.

Gen. Aoun's ouster came 11 months after the election of the Syria-backed Hrawi, who has since been living at a residence owned by Prime Minister Rafik Hariri at Beirut's Ramlet Al-Baida seaside residential district.

Mr. Hariri, a self-made billionaire, also made sizeable donations to finance the reconstruction of the Baabda Palace. Mr. Hrawi said 550 Lebanese architects, technicians and workers have been working on the reconstruction since May.

Mr. Hrawi also said he has invited Syrian President Hafez Al-Assad to make his first ever presidential visit to Beirut and that the invitation has been accepted.

"I will play host to President Assad when the reconstruction of the guest wing in the palace is complete," Mr. Hrawi said, without specifying a date.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Rafsanjani sympathises with Libya's woes

NICOSIA (R) — Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani met a Libyan cabinet minister Tuesday and expressed regret over harshness imposed on Libya by its enemies, Tebran Radio said. "Arrogant powers plot to create difficulties for revolutionary countries and we hope that these countries can foil the plan through patience and resistance," it quoted Mr. Rafsanjani telling Libya's Strategic Industries Minister Jaddallah Azzouz Al-Talhi in Tehran. Mr. Talhi relayed Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi's greeting to Mr. Rafsanjani, the radio said. The U.N. Security Council banned flights to Libya in April 1992 after Libya refused to hand over two suspects in the 1988 bombing of a Pan-Am airliner over Scotland.

Rafsanjani to visit Kazakhstan

NICOSIA (R) — Iran said on Tuesday President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani will visit the former Soviet republic of Kazakhstan "soon" to boost ties between the two states. Iran's IRNA news agency quoted Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati as saying Mr. Rafsanjani would discuss expansion of political, cultural and scientific cooperation in Alma-Ata with President Nursultan Nazarbayev. It gave no specific date. Iranian opposition groups and Western press reports said last year Iran was buying nuclear weapons from Kazakhstan, but the U.S. State Department rejected the reports in October. Kazakhstan, where 40 per cent of the population are Muslims, is Iran's partner in the 12-nation Economic Cooperation Organisation. The two countries have no common borders but share the Caspian Sea along with three other former Soviet republics. IRNA said Mr. Velayati was speaking at the opening day of a training course at the Foreign Ministry for seven Kazakh diplomats, the third of its kind held in Tehran.

Gendarmes kill two in Algeria

ALGIERS (R) — Algerian gendarmes shot dead two Muslim activists and wounded a third in an operation to flush out fundamentalists suspected of several killings, the official news agency APS said Tuesday. It said the operation was mounted Sunday. About 67 members of the security forces and 23 soldiers have been killed in the last seven months in attacks blamed on Muslim activists dedicated to setting up an Islamic republic.

Northern Cyprus may end protection of Nadir

LONDON (AFP) — Northern Cyprus has given its strongest indication to date that it may be prepared to abandon its uncompromising protection of fugitive tycoon Asil Nadir, the Financial Times reported Wednesday. The authorities, with the apparent blessing of the Turkish government, have invited senior officers of the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) to the island without any apparent diplomatic strings. The fraud office had argued that it was unable to pursue its investigation on the island because the local authorities and Ankara were insisting on a formal diplomatic exchange. This would have implied British recognition of Turkish sovereignty over northern Cyprus, which E.U. countries refuse to give. The SFO confirmed late Tuesday that one of its investigating teams travelled to northern Cyprus Tuesday at the "invitation" of the Turkish Cypriot authorities. Nadir, 52, fled Britain on May 4 for his native northern Cyprus, jumping bail of £3.5 million pounds (\$3.25 million) to escape 20 charges of fraud involving his failed conglomerate Polly Peck International. Britain and northern Cyprus have no extradition treaty.

Iran denies links with Turkey's Kurds

NICOSIA (R) — Iran said on Tuesday that it had no links with Turkey's rebel Kurds. An Iranian security official, quoted by Iran's IRNA news agency, denounced Turkish media reports and purported evidence suggesting such links. Gholamhosseini Bolandian said officials in Turkey had shown an Iranian delegation two hand grenades marked with the emblem of the Islamic Republic of Iran, saying they had been seized from Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) guerrillas. Mr. Bolandian, secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, said Iran did not produce that type of grenade and in any case did not print its emblem. "The Iranian delegation presented their conclusive evidence to Turkish officials and called the action amateurish," IRNA quoted Mr. Bolandian as saying. Turkey's Anatolia news agency said last week Ankara's Foreign Ministry handed documents indicating the presence of PKK fighters in Iran to its Ambassador Mohammad Reza Bagheri and asked Tehran to prevent the PKK from establishing bases there. Mr. Bolandian, according to IRNA, said the Iranian delegation had in turn handed the Turks documents about activities of the opposition Mujahideen-e-Khalq group and the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan on Turkish soil.

EC gives aid to Palestinian refugees

BRUSSELS (AP) — The European Community (EC) announced Wednesday it would provide \$562,000 in emergency aid to Palestinian refugees in the occupied Gaza Strip. A statement from the 12-nation trading bloc said the money, worth 500,000 European currency units (ECUs), would be used to buy food, medicine, medical equipment, tents and other needed goods for those in the occupied territories.

Two Iraqi Kurdish parties merge

ANKARA (R) — Two Iraqi Kurdish parties have merged under the leadership of guerrilla chief Masoud Barzani, a statement received in Ankara said Wednesday. It said Mr. Barzani, head of the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), signed a unity agreement with the smaller Kurdistan Unity Party in the northern Iraqi town of Salahuddin the Tuesday. He described it as "a historical achievement of Kurdish unity." The new party will be officially known as the Kurdish Democratic Party-Iraq (UNITED), the statement said. The Kurdistan Unity Party, formed in August 1992 from a merger of the Kurdistan Socialist Party, the Kurdistan People's Democratic Party and the Kurdish Social Party-Pasok, had been discussing unity arrangements with the KDP since January.

Khamenei assails Armenian raids on Azeris

NICOSIA (R) — Iranian spiritual leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei flew to Iran's Azeri heartland Tuesday to condemn Armenian attacks on Azerbaijan and praise Iran's own Azeris for rejecting secessionism.

Huge crowds waving red-white-and-green Iranian flags mobbed Ayatollah Khamenei's car, turning the welcome into a display of support for Iran's Islamic leadership in Tabriz, the main city of Iran's large Azeri community.

Iranian Television gave full coverage to the rare visit a week after a parliament deputy from an Azeri city voiced a long-standing complaint that the central government discriminated against Azeris, even in local appointments.

"The government of Armenia and Karabakh Armenians are oppressing Muslims in this region," the television quoted Ayatollah Khamenei as saying in a speech at a packed stadium.

"We condemn the recent actions Karabakh Armenians have carried out with the support of the Armenian government and we expect the Armenians in our country to likewise denounce the behaviour of Armenians in that

region," Ayatollah Khamenei said.

Armenian forces captured the Azeri town of Agdam last week and were reported to be threatening the southern town of Fizuli in the latest of a series of advances into Azeri territory.

The Armenian government maintains that only Armenians from the disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh, which is inside Azerbaijan but has a majority population of Armenians, are engaged in fighting Azeri forces.

Ayatollah Khamenei's clear-cut denunciation of Armenia would please Iranian Azeris, many of whom disapprove of Teheran's even-handed stance in the undeclared war over Nagorno-Karabakh which has killed nearly 3,000 people in five years.

Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia were part of Persia until the 19th century when Russia defeated Persian kings in two wars.

Ayatollah Khamenei, whose family is originally from Iranian Azerbaijan, paid tribute to the Azeri community as the "front line of the Iranian nation's defense against aggressors in recent centuries."

Afghan cabinet meets on tension with Tajikistan

KABUL (R) — Afghanistan's cabinet held an emergency meeting Tuesday to discuss a border conflict with Tajik and Russian forces and a Kabul spokesman said Afghans would teach Moscow a lesson if it tried to attack.

"The cabinet discussed the border situation and came to some fruitful decisions," spokesman Rasheed said, adding that the conclusions would be announced Wednesday after approval by President Burhanuddin Rabbani.

A raid on the Tajikistan border from Afghanistan by Tajik rebels two weeks ago killed 10 Tajiks and 25 Russian border guards, who protect the vulnerable frontier under an agreement with the government of the former Soviet Central Asian republic.

Moscow says Afghan troops based in the northern province of Takhar have backed rebel attacks. Afghan officials have accused Russian troops of unprovoked shelling that they say has killed or wounded hundreds of villagers and forced thousands to flee. Foreign Minister Amin Arsalai denied involvement in troubles in the Central Asian republic but said "attacks on our borders are something we

bave to protest about very strongly."

"We bave to defend our borders," he said.

Mr. Saeed said Afghanistan wanted to resolve the problem through talks, but accused Russia of taking advantage of Kabul's weak government and internal disunity to destabilise the country.

"When there is foreign aggression the Afghans will unite in getting revenge," he said of a cross-border bombardment that have evoked memories on both sides of Moscow's costly 10-year military intervention in Afghanistan.

"If the Afghans are compelled to fight against the Russians they will learn the same lesson we taught them for 10 years," he said. Afghan guerrillas, fighting the former Soviet-backed Kabul government, forced Soviet troops to quit the country in 1989.

Tajikistan Foreign Minister Rashid Alimov on Tuesday invited Russia, Uzbek and Afghan officials to hold talks in mid-August in the Tajik capital Dushanbe to settle the border conflict and discuss the question of Tajik refugees in Afghanistan.

Anger and uncertainty amid mass Lebanese exodus in the heat

By Yasmine Dakik
Agence France Presse

TYRE — They fled out under the burning sun, dragging the remains of what once had been their homes with them: Thousands of cars packed with people fleeing the Israeli bombardment.

Old men, babies, mothers with their children crammed into old jalopies bursting with mattresses, bundles of clothes and pots and pans. They formed part of Tuesday's massive traffic jam stretching along the 45-kilometre coastal road between Tyre and Sidon, in southern Lebanon.

Around 300,000 people have been forced out of their homes in Lebanon by Israeli bombing in "operation accountability" between Sunday and Tuesday. Many of them made their way towards Beirut.

Some of them left because, Israel warned them their villages would be razed. Many others saw their homes, and their lives, destroyed before them.

Abu Hassan had managed to

drive only 40 kilometres in five hours of suffocating sunshine. He sat at the wheel of a battered Mercedes, his family and his brother's family stuffed into the passenger's seat, the back seat and even the trunk, where 10 children, were jumbled up of each other under the open lid.

"We left because of the kids. They were terrified by the explosions. I can't even begin to describe the last two days. Even in the (Israeli) invasion in 1982, it wasn't as bad as this," Abu Hassan said.

Mattresses, cushions and strain mats were piled on top of his car, rolled up and tied up. "There is almost nothing left of our village. I don't know where to go. I don't have any relatives in Beirut," he said.

"If we have to, we'll become squatters, like so many others."

Raisin-faced old men covered their heads with towels or pieces of cardboard to protect themselves from the sun as they trudged by the side of the road. Some groups had borrowed or hired school buses, capable of transporting many

families, who sat inside sulterly, sweating.

A Lebanese Red Cross ambulance, siren blaring, tried frantically to find a way through the monster snarl-up. Policemen, utterly bewildered by the situation, worked them selves up into a rage.

At some spots, families piled out of their cars and dumped themselves in the shade at the side of the road, waiting for the traffic jam to disappear.

They were headed for Beirut, where Mr. Wazni has cousins, but they were scared their relatives' house would already be overflowing with refugees.

"The Jews are acting like savages and cowards. Neither women nor children are spared," he said. "Luckily the resistance is there to stop them from invading the whole of the south. Otherwise they'd do it in a shot," adds his sister, Tisan.

"The Israelis say they're de-

fending themselves against the resistance, but that's a lie. How can they say that when it's them who are occupying our land? Why don't they leave, then we'll all leave them alone," adds his sister, Tisan.

Her eyes bloodshot from lack of sleep.

There was even a traffic jam in the opposite direction, containing Lebanese people desperately heading south in search of their relatives in the country.

Raji Attwi, 30, had been stuck on the outskirts of Tyre for several hours. "I haven't heard from my parents since Sunday. I'm trying to get to Tyre to take them to Beirut."

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

17:30

Opinion & Analysis

Jordan Times

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Good news from Yemen

MOHAMMAD BASSANDAWA, the Yemeni foreign minister, was upbeat after his recent visit to Saudi Arabia. He had reported that King Fahd made him feel very optimistic about the prospects of Arab reconciliation. That indeed is good news. One, because King Fahd is key to an Arab reconciliation drive and two, because if Yemen and Saudi Arabia could bury their differences and restore normal ties after the rift created by the Gulf crisis, then that might be the first step in a process that every Arab hopes would restore to the Arab World its pre-1990 cohesion. Much, of course, needs to be done to achieve such an aspired-to goal. The rift has been so wide and suspicions have run so deep. No one could deny the trauma inflicted on the nation by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August, 1990. By now every Arab leadership and Arab people have felt the consequences of that blunder. Jordanians, Palestinians, Saudis, Gulf Arabs, Egyptians and Yemenis were among those who suffered.

But by far the Kuwaitis and Iraqis are the main victims. And they were not the victims of their own deeds. Rather they were victimised by their leaderships and their leaders' miscalculations.

We, of course, do not expect quick fixes. The situation in the Arab World requires a new era that would still have to address the grievances that led to the Gulf crisis and war. These include a unified Arab position to confront the challenges of the post-cold war era, the threat of radicalism, the ambitions of neighbours and a fair distribution of wealth.

Of urgency is a unified Arab stand to deal with the intricacies of the current peace process. The Arab parties to the process need the backing of a unified Arab front to make bargaining more beneficial to the Arab and Palestinian sides. The Arab leaders, especially the Saudi leadership, are duty-bound, to their people and history, to put their differences aside and place the interests of the nation above all other interests.

With a collective stand, the Arab peoples can extract a better deal in Palestine, in the world oil market and in the new world order. Political, social and economic problems can only be addressed through cooperation, and examples abound. Division will only bring weakness. And we are hopeful that sensible and wise Arab leaders will seek the ultimate interests of the nation. Mr. Bassandawa's optimism is therefore good news indeed.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE FORMER U.S. Secretary of state, James Baker, used to complain that every time he was about to visit Tel Aviv, in the course of a tour of the Middle East, the Israelis would receive him by announcing new plans for more Jewish settlements in the occupied Arab lands, said the local daily Al Ra'i. Wednesday. These days, the present secretary of state, Warren Christopher, is preparing to make a tour of the region and the Israelis are showering Lebanon with rockets and shells and declaring that their war on Lebanon will not end until they have disarmed the resistance group found in the south, said the daily. The paper said that with this new aggression, it is difficult to speak about any peace process in the region. What the Israelis are doing now, said the daily, is a total disregard of the peace process of those sponsoring the peace process and the other parties involved in it, continued the paper. It said the world's major powers have a special responsibility towards stemming Israel's aggression on the Arab countries and towards paving the ground for peace. The first step in this direction, added the paper, lies in allowing the U.N. Security Council to deal with the issue and stop the aggression immediately and then force the Israelis to implement Resolution 425 of 1978, which provides for an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanese territory, demanded the paper. However, the Israelis do not count on Mr. Christopher's visit to achieve any solution now that they have exposed their real intentions and evil designs, added the paper. It said that while the aggression continues there can be no chance for any peace.

THIS TIME the Israeli aggression on Lebanon is of a different nature since the victim is prohibited to lodge a complaint with the U.N. Security Council, said a columnist in Al Dastour. As soon as Lebanon complained to the Security Council, Washington barred any meeting on the part of the council members to deal with the dangerous situation in the Middle East, said Mohammad Kawash. He said that Washington took this step under the pretext that a council meeting could endanger the peace process. Lebanon and the Arab World at large have no power to say anything because of the continuous inter-Arab divisions and differences and the absence of Arab solidarity, said the writer. Under the so-called new world order, Israel is being given free hand to demolish villages and expand its occupied territories in South Lebanon at will. Of course, it is being backed in this aggression by the United States which sponsors the peace process, he added. The United States is blaming Syria and Iran for the aggression in order to escape the wrath of the Arab masses and to force the Arab parties to the peace process to accept Israel's conditions.

Governments should help workers get smart

By Robert B. Reich

WASHINGTON — Throughout the industrialised world there seem to be too few good jobs to go around. The problem manifests itself differently in different countries, but the failure of any to ensure good jobs for many able and willing citizens raises a troubling question: Do advanced nations have to choose between good jobs and more jobs?

In the last two decades western Europe has had growth in wages but stagnation in employment. From 1975 to 1992 the real (inflation-adjusted) average wages of manufacturing workers in France, Germany, Italy and Britain grew by 30 to 50 per cent, but unemployment in European industrialised economies has risen by close to a staggering 11 per cent.

How does the United States compare? On the narrow score of the number of jobs, we rank quite well. Since 1975, our economy has generated nearly 2 million new jobs per year. And although our current unemployment rate of 7 per cent is disturbing, more than 800,000 jobs have been created since January, as economic growth has begun to stir.

Our bigger long-term problem is creating jobs that pay well. The average wages of America's production workers, adjusted for inflation, are the lowest they have been since 1967. Eighteen per cent of full-time workers do not earn enough to keep a family of four out of poverty; this level is up from 12 per cent in 1979. And more Americans who want full-time jobs are working part-time instead.

Wages and incomes in America have become more unequal since the early 1970s. They have risen for upper-income workers, remained stagnant for the middle class and fallen for those at the bottom. In no other advanced industrialised nation is the income gap so wide between the managers and professionals and the production workers.

Must we accept a diabolical trade-off between good jobs and more jobs as factories move to places around the world where labour costs less, and as smart machines take on more tasks at home? I believe that a trade-off is not inevitable if we draw the right conclusion from the underlying economic trends.

The pattern of wage inequality in the United States provides an important clue. From 1980 to 1991 the weekly real earnings of full-time workers above the age of 25 who had graduated from college rose by 9 per cent. That's not so bad. But the real weekly earnings of similar workers who had only completed high school dropped by 7 per cent. And

similar workers without high school diplomas suffered a drop in earnings of 14 per cent.

Today the weekly earnings of American full-time workers above 25 who are college graduates are more than 50 per cent above the earnings of otherwise similar workers who are simply high school graduates.

The pattern of unemployment provides a second clue. In Europe and the United States, the uneducated and unskilled have been hardest hit. While college graduates did not escape the prolonged recession in the United States, only 3.2 per cent were unemployed last year compared with 11.4 per cent of those who dropped out of high school.

The long-term crisis in advanced industrial nations reflects in part a shift in relative labour demand against less-educated workers and those doing routine tasks and towards workers with problem-solving skills.

So, how do we move a work force suited to one sort of economy quickly and smoothly into a world grown suddenly quite different? No country has yet found the formula. But different countries have illustrated different ways to get it wrong.

The continental European approach has been to have government intervene heavily in the wage-setting process and seek to preserve the existing pattern of employment. This has prevented the gap between high-wage and low-wage workers from widening much, but it has not directly addressed the profound changes in the demand for skills. Such policies have maintained wages and job security for the employed, but they have retarded the creation of new jobs.

In the United States and Britain, employers have responded more directly to changes in labour force supply and demand. The result has been greater inequality in wages and working conditions. The apparent payoff from this Faustian bargain is a rate of U.S. job growth in the last two decades that has been the envy of Europe. Nevertheless, job growth in the United States and Britain has been punctuated by high unemployment in recessions and tarnished by worsening problems of permanent loss of jobs.

A third blind alley is protection from exports. No advanced nation is blameless. Yet setting global markets through protectionism is no solution. New technologies will reduce the demand for less-skilled workers even if borders are sealed. And many of the high-wage jobs of the future will be tied to exports and

jobs that service the export industry. Protectionism cripples economic progress while failing to save jobs.

Americans have traditionally cast their lot with open trade. In recent years we have wavered. But in Tokyo, President Bill Clinton led the Group of Seven industrialised countries another major step down the path of openness. The trade agreement initiated there has sharply improved the odds for a new global accord. The president also established ground rules for measuring how far Japan opens its market.

The odds of advanced nations adapting to a changing world are higher than they were before the summit meeting, holding hope for America's own economic recovery.

In addition, the president's proposed sharp reduction in the budget deficit will remove a significant source of uncertainty about the stability of the world economy and aid recovery. A strong commitment to fiscal expansion in Japan and monetary easing in Europe could also help job growth in America.

But domestic policies are also needed to deal with the mismatch between the skills Americans have and the skills the economy requires. Here are five: a good basic education for all children; affordable college; school-to-work apprenticeships for young people who do not go on to college; transition help to new jobs for displaced workers; lifetime learning in the workplace.

This list essentially describes the Clinton agenda for the workforce.

Some parts of it are already embodied in legislative initiative; others are still taking shape. The imperative of investment in the work force is so compelling and the goal of building America's skill base so broadly shared that the debate remains remarkably free of partisan wrangling.

This "ethnic cleansing" is based on the well-known theory that "the people are the water in which the guerrillas swim." Sodden away the water and the guerrillas cannot move or even live. The tactic has been tried in South Lebanon many times before, but never on so large a scale and it will not work now. Because after some days or weeks or months, the people, invariably, flow back and the fish, the fighters, come back with them. Because the people, who are mostly farmers in South Lebanon, have nowhere else to go. It is not easy to uproot farmers from their ancestral soil that they have tilled for generations.

The writer is U.S. secretary of labour. This article is reprinted from *The New York Times*.
Perhaps Mr. Clinton is calculating on rendering South

Why Israel's 'ethnic cleansing' will not work in South Lebanon

By G.H. Jansen

AFTER the Serbs have "got away" with the "ethnic cleansing" of the Bosnian Muslims, the very same tactic is now being used by Israel against the Shi'ite Muslim inhabitants of South Lebanon; and as of Wednesday, the process has been expanding.

The Serbs did, at least, show some decency or guilt in not proclaiming to the world what they were doing, but no less a person than the Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has announced that he wants to make South Lebanon "uninhabitable" by sending "a flood of refugees" into Beirut.

This tactic, that smacks of genocide, is working because the Lebanese estimate is that 180,000 Lebanese have been driven out of their homes in the villages and towns of the south by continuous, round the clock artillery bombardment and attacks from the air. In the first three days of "Operation Accountability" the Israelis say they fired 7,000 shells into Lebanon. After some initial talk, on Sunday, of Hizbullah "terrorist" targets being hit, on Monday the Israelis admitted that they were aiming at "the outskirts" of villages and the town of Nabatia at the centre of inhabited areas. No less than 70 locations have been hit.

Propaganda is an important part of the "cleansing" tactic: people are warned of coming attacks and are urged to leave, which gives a good impression while building up fear and getting people on the move. One "decoy" aspect of Serb "ethnic cleansing" is that it was carried out by soldiers, some of whom could have got killed in the process; Israel, being a "modern" state, does its "cleansing" at long range, using artillery and planes.

This "ethnic cleansing" is based on the well-known theory that "the people are the water in which the guerrillas swim." Sodden away the water and the guerrillas cannot move or even live. The tactic has been tried in South Lebanon many times before, but never on so large a scale and it will not work now. Because after some days or weeks or months, the people, invariably, flow back and the fish, the fighters, come back with them. Because the people, who are mostly farmers in South Lebanon, have nowhere else to go. It is not easy to uproot farmers from their ancestral soil that they have tilled for generations.

How is Lebanon, and the Beirut area, coping with the sudden influx of so many people? The burden is eased because the people are southern Shi'ites accustomed to moving back and forth. And the normally large Shi'ite family can always take in more people "for a few days."

It is because of the continuing Israeli occupation of this part of Lebanon that no Lebanese can think of suppressing Hizbullah which has become the national resistance to a foreign occupier. Indeed, the Lebanese government has described that national resistance as both a right and a duty, which it is.

How is Lebanon, and the Beirut area, coping with the sudden influx of so many people? The burden is eased because the people are southern Shi'ites accustomed to moving back and forth. And the normally large Shi'ite family can always take in more people "for a few days."

What would be really serious would be an exodus from the southern cities of Tyre and Sidon, which is what Israel is threatening to bring about, because it claims, resistance groups have their bases there.

The key factor in relations between Israel and Lebanon is Resolution 425, but Israel and its friends are trying to pretend that that resolution does not exist. Such moral and political obtuseness simply will not work.

New Pacific Community has U.S., Asia sharing ideas

By Robert F. Holden

SINGAPORE — President Clinton's concept for a "New Pacific Community," as demonstrated by Secretary of State Warren Christopher's recent visit to Asia, calls for a sharing of policy ideas with America's Asian friends, according to a senior U.S. official.

There are three components to this trip, the official said — the ASEAN meeting itself, the series of bilateral meetings that take place on the margins of the PMC between the six ASEAN members, several dialogue partners and observers, and Mr. Christopher's visit — with Under Secretary of Defense Frank Wisner — to Australia.

The United States will pursue its economic interests at the ASEAN PMC on global, regional and bilateral levels, the official said. "On the global level, we're going to press for the successful conclusion of the Uruguay round," the official said. "ASEAN is one of the major initiators of the Uruguay round and would be one of the major beneficiaries, so we hope that this conference would reinforce the idea that we want to get their ideas and not just lay down American prescriptions."

"Yes, we'll show leadership. Yes, we have ideas of our own," the official said. "But we mean it when we say we want to hear what their ideas are — to consult with our friends."

The administration expects the secretary's appearance at the meeting to strike a balance between dynamism in proposing ideas and being genuinely receptive to the ideas of others and factoring them into U.S. policy decisions, the official said.

The secretary of state is going to the Asia-Pacific region to begin the implementation of President Clinton's vision of a "New Pacific Community," to flesh out the economic, security and democracy promotion themes expounded by the president in his speeches at Waseda University and in Korea, the official said.

This is Mr. Christopher's third trip to the region in the past six months, and it is one of a series of

trips by senior administration officials that have already taken place, the official said. "These trips, the official said, underline the administration's interest in the Asia-Pacific region, the fact that we're going to stay on in this region and, indeed, that we're going to be playing a strong leadership role in this region."

The first one is that we will maintain our alliance and our military presence," the official said. "In ASEAN we have two treaty allies — the Philippines and Thailand — plus we have access agreements in the wake of the Philippine bases closing where the ASEAN countries have all made available some facilities.

The second theme, the official said, is non-proliferation. "We'll talk about this in some of the conference sessions and in some of the individual bilateral meetings," the official said. "Obviously, this is relevant with respect to China and their alleged exports of missiles and other dangerous technology. It's relevant to discussions with South Korea because of the North Korea nuclear challenge. And it's relevant to our discussions with Russia where we've just had a major breakthrough on the non-proliferation front."

ASEAN itself is important to the cause of non-proliferation, the official said, primarily in areas that require export controls such as chemical weapons and electronic components for missiles.

The third element, a new departure from the policies of past administrations, is regional security dialogue, the official said. "We will maintain our alliances and we will maintain a full military presence," the official said. "Regional dialogues are on top of those foundations. They supplement them, they do not supplant them."

The official cautioned that the dialogues will not result in "instant formal security structures. We're talking about incremental exploring how you can shore up security in this region."

"Asia is not Europe," the official said. "In Asia the idea is not to build up blocs against a common threat. It's for potential antagonists, for countries which harbour potential apprehensions about other countries to have a chance to talk to each other directly and try to relieve misperceptions ... (and) try to head off confrontation, ease tensions and perhaps build up confidence over time."

Southeast Asia will not necessarily be the only area where the United States will support such a framework, the official said. "We probably will need one for Northeast Asia as well. But this one can cover, not only Southeast Asian problems, but those of the whole region because we have a dialogue not only with the ASEAN countries but with the other dialogue partners — Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Korea, Japan, and the European Community," the official said.

The security issues discussed under this framework can also be divided into global, regional and bilateral areas, the official said.

Finally, the official said, the secretary will emphasise the high priority the Clinton administration places on the promotion of democracy and human rights. "Each country has to find its own way, but there are some universal human rights — recently reaffirmed at the Geneva conference — and, with respect to democracy, open societies make for a more peaceful world," the official said — United States Information Agency.

LETTERS

Indelible experience

To the Editor:

Recently I took an early morning flight from Queen Alia International Airport. Before checking in at the boarding gate, I went to use the women's toilet. This is what I found: two large black garbage bags on the floor, open and overflowing with all manner of refuse; no toilet overall cleanliness were so distasteful that I left. I complained to (Haj) this kind of thing always happens. I was also told, by someone else, that the airport contracts an outside company to do the cleaning. I do not think either answer can justify the filthy condition of the toilets.

I have waited at the Jordanian border of Ramtha many times and times. At both places the toilets and washing sinks are dirty, lacking malfunctioning and disgusting.

The three most common reasons are the shortage of water, ignorance and theft. It is obvious that without sufficient water one cannot flush toilets nor can a worker keep the premises clean. I have also been told repeatedly that many people in Jordan abuse public toilets out of ignorance, or they pilfer everything that isn't bolted to the floor to accept these or any other excuses.

It seems that more plausible reasons for the filthy state of these public facilities are the inferior materials, insufficient plumbing, poor building costs. The latest chemicals and the most diligent worker cannot clean a toilet that is non-functioning. These facilities should be gutted and rebuilt to serve the public.

This nation is progressing on many levels and it is unthinkable that their visitors with clean, working toilets for a universal body function present pitiful condition of the public toilets at one of Jordan's three gateways will remember it with distaste. All the good food, pleasant hospitality and fascinating sites will not erase the experience.

Ann Sawalha;
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and request and under special circumstances. Letters can be withheld only upon editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Weekender



July 29, 1993

Published Every Thursday

Venezuelan soap opera — a mirror to social ills

By Gary Regenstrief

Reuter

CARACAS Venezuela (R) — The Venezuelan leader, his voice cracking with emotion, appeared on prime-time television to announce he was stepping aside to face charges of corruption.

"I would have preferred a different death," he said.

Dramatic stuff. But was it merely drama or was it real?

It was both in Venezuela, where society's ills are dramatised nightly in the wildly popular soap opera "Por Estas Calles", featuring corrupt politicians, judges and police, unethical doctors, drug dealers and petty thieves.

The parting line was uttered by President Carlos Andres Perez last May after learning he must stand trial

on charges of embezzlement and misuse of public funds.

Days later, so did Don Chepe, a corrupt governor on "Por Estas Calles" (Through These Streets), the hottest TV show in Venezuela and one that has been sold to countries ranging from Uruguay to the United States and from Chile to China.

It contrasts the high life of the corrupt and the squalor of the slumdwellers while interweaving comments on the crumbling public services that infuriate residents of Caracas.

The programme, first aired little more than a year ago, serves as an outlet of emotion to many Venezuelans angered by corruption, worried about rising crime and frustrated by appalling water and telephone service.

The drama highlights the negative in this nation that has been gripped by political

crisis, and social unrest sparked by austerity measures that scuppered a paternalistic system of government handouts financed by an oil boom two decades ago.

This is irresponsible. This is an incitement to violence, many argue it is a fair mirror to society.

Indeed, a Latin American diplomat, upon arriving in Caracas last year, was told by a colleague that "Por Estas Calles" was a quick study on the nation.

"She told me this would serve me better than talking to all the leaders and analysts about what is going on in the country," the diplomat recalled in an interview.

"Por Estas Calles" was born as a traditional soap opera but, before airing, the staff rewrote it thoroughly after a coup attempt against the Perez administration in February 1992.

It has worked. Half of Venezuelans who watch television at 9 p.m. tune in to "Por Estas Calles."

One who claims not to

watch the programme is the suspended president, who nevertheless railed against it during a luncheon with a group of associates and bankers.

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In fact, the government was so irate at one point that it threatened to shut down the show, arguing that it was sending "subversive" messages.

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It has worked. Half of Venezuelans who watch television at 9 p.m. tune in to "Por Estas Calles."

"This is a prototype of

Venezuelan society. This is the reality of the country," said Giaroco, whose office is adorned with an inscription from Latin American independence hero Simon Bolivar which reads, "he who resolves to be free is so."

"Por Estas Calles" is likely to go off the air later in July but only because producers fear it will begin to become repetitive.

"We want it to end on a high note," Giaroco said.

But the programme will live on where it has been sold: Ecuador, the Dominican Republic, Panama, Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, Brazil, the United States, Spain, Italy, Germany, France, Turkey, Bangladesh, Poland, Czechoslovakia and China.

"In Latin America the problems that we have are similar," Giaroco added.

Conservationists fight to save Robin Hood's forest

By Jeff Daeschner

Reuter

SHERWOOD FOREST, England — Robin Hood and his band would have a hard job finding a place to hide from the Sheriff of Nottingham in Sherwood Forest these days.

The forest of 500-year-old oaks and slender silver birches where the legendary thief and his merry men used to live stands on the brink of extinction, forestry experts say.

Sprawling towns and farms, as well as the constant use of the woods for recreation, have endangered the forest which used to be called "Shirewood" because it covered most of the shire (county) of Nottingham in central England.

Britain's Forestry Commission aims to save the forest by

planting trees to recreate the wood and heathlands as part of the country's fight to protect its endangered natural reserves.

A year after launching the project, efforts to involve local farmers and corporations have got off to a slow start.

So far, only 500 trees have been planted, paid for by a Japanese company as part of a general environmental programme.

"If we don't save the forest now, there won't be much of it left," said Austin Brady, project director for the Sherwood Initiative. "We're aiming to bring it back from the brink."

Under the Sherwood Initiative, conservationists are trying to work with local people to plant 2,000 acres (800 hectares) of trees in the next 10 to 20 years to unite the

remnants of the forest's historic heath and woodlands.

"We're not looking at planting vast areas of new forest, but rather creating carefully preserved areas," Mr. Brady said.

The Forestry Commission plans to mark the latest phase of the Sherwood Initiative to see the oak tree where Robin and his men used to hide from the Sheriff of Nottingham.

Forestry experts say the tree, at least 500 years old and propped up by timbers, would have been at best a mere sapling in the early 13th century, when legal records refer to Robert Hood as a fugitive from justice.

The tree, known as the Major Oak, is the biggest in Sherwood Forest and the 16th largest in Britain, according to forestry figures.

New facilities such as trekking routes and a new park will open in a newer section of the forest to draw some of

the area's 800,000 visitors each year from the ancient Birklands Woodlands where Robin and his big-hearted fellow outlaws are reputed to have lived.

Most foreign tourists visit the Birklands' Sherwood Forest County Park to see the oak tree where Robin and his men used to hide from the Sheriff of Nottingham.

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"For a lot of people, who come to the area, there's a certain amount of disappoint-

ment because the fragments of the forest don't live up to their expectations," Mr. Brady said.

The project's long-term goal is to adapt Sherwood's tourist appeal to its modern use as a site for lumber production, wildlife preservation and recreation, including cycling, trekking, and car rallying.

"When you're talking about woods and forests and you ask someone to name a forest, they usually think of Sherwood Forest. Because it's so well known, Sherwood should be a shining example of what forests are like," Mr. Brady said.

He added that he expected it will be 10 years before visitors notice a difference in the forest. "It's going to be a long process, but it's good to get it started," he said.

BOOK REVIEWS

An objective airing

Arab Voices: The Human Rights Debate In The Middle East

By Kevin Dwyer
Routledge, London 1991, £10.99

Kevin Dwyer has good reason to be interested in human rights issues, given his long association with Amnesty International. He has equally good reason to be acutely concerned with cultural expression in the Middle East and North Africa, given his background as an anthropologist and a leading exponent of "dialogics", the view that sociological and anthropological investigation is a cultural confrontation in which the attitudes and conclusions of both cultures are simultaneously open to question. Both these interests come together in this excellent book, which belies its title and is far more wide-ranging in its subject matter.

The book is really based on North Africa, on the three countries of Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco. This is partly because of the author's own preferences and because these three countries are among the freest societies in the region and thus are the easiest for Western access and investigation. Its real subject is not just the "human rights debate" but much wider cultural attitudes relating to the role of religion, to concepts of individual freedom, the role of women and human rights as conveniently understood in the West. It contrasts indigenous views of these concepts with indigenous attitudes towards Western interpretations of them, at a time when it is Western values that are being imposed worldwide. The book, true to its implicit theoretical assumptions, does not try to draw explicit conclusions; instead it contrasts different views from a wide range of commentators who are often quoted at length.

The result is a compendium of attitudes and views that are of vital importance to anyone concerned with understanding such issues in a Middle Eastern context. Its commentators are drawn from Islamists, orthodox Muslims, secularists and the new technocrats and intellectuals of the region. Their views may well be open to criticism, but at least they are available for criticism. In any case, the very fact that they have been recorded by a sympathetic, albeit critical, observer makes it clear that many indigenous views deserve a far more serious and sympathetic hearing than they have received to date. In a world where Eurocentrism has acquired renewed respectability in recent years, such objective treatment of Muslim and Middle Eastern feelings is all the more important and worthwhile — Middle East International.

Iran's malaise

Reconstruction And Regional Diplomacy In The Persian Gulf

Edited by H. Amiranmadi And N. Entessar
Routledge, London 1992, £35

Here is a mixed bag of ten studies about Iran, its domestic condition and international relations, contributed mostly by Iranian academics and other scholars in American institutions. They deal chiefly with development since the Islamic revolution, the foundation of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the war against Iraq; but some, evidently written before Desert Storm and the fall of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, are a little dated already.

Since the revolution, according to Dr. Amiranmadi (Rutgers University), the extraordinary course of events has been largely "unfavourable for Iran's long-term development and standing among the community of nations." His copious statistics of direct and indirect economic damage of revolution, war and earthquake are indeed appalling. In an economy which is neither free-market nor planned he lists crippling imbalances of demand and supply, expenditure and income, labour and employment, and growth and available technology.

To deal with this catastrophic situation he observes that President Hashemi Rafsanjani "has been steadily moving away from ideology towards more pragmatism"; he quotes the foreign minister on a "new order" in which "economic considerations overshadow political priorities"; and notes signs that the chief of the Planning and Budget Organisation looks to a free-market system and the director of the Central Bank to foreign investment. The author himself would like to see an "Iranian perestroika", a quest for friendship in the West, and the return, for example, of some of the two million Iranians who have left Iran since the fall of the shah. As to international relations, Dr. Ehteshami (Exeter) believes that "Islamic" foreign policy is now "up for modernisation" and that "the pragmatist line is winning."

Such a development, of course, is to be wished. But both these observers are aware of bitter resistance on the part of leaders like Ali Akbar Mohtashemi and Ahmad Khomeini and their followers. And, in his paper on the American connection, Dr. Milani (South Florida), blaming the errors of the U.S., as Iranians tend to do, for whatever has recently happened, recalls that Iran's Islamic Revolution, however sour it has turned, was "one of the most popular revolutions of our time."

But why is Iran particularly prone to revolution in the first place? Trying to answer that question, Professor Nikki Keddie (California) disengages cultural, economic and political factors, reverting to Zoroaster, the Shiites and the Qajars, but draws attention, in reference to the recent revolution, to special elements of dissatisfaction amongst students, urban terrorists, the bazaar, and radical clerics excited by the agitation of Ayatollah Khomeini.

Such a pity that most of these essays, laced with hackneyed jargon and mixed metaphors and sprinkled with misprints, are so badly written — Middle East International.

Diary

APOLOGETIC JUSTICE: In this space last week, we told the story of a journalist whose life was complicated by more than mere threats. A warning bullet was shot at the window of his bedroom in his Amman home. The journalist did not only have to suffer through this ordeal, especially that his 9-month-old baby was in the room at the time, but also had to taste a bit of the medicine of those who hate people who keep the truth. "He who resolves to be free is so," reads the inscription on the wall of his office.

"Por Estas Calles" is likely to go off the air later in July but only because producers broadcast 100 consecutive episodes of "Por Estas Calles" without treating viewers to even a simple kiss.

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Mind your language

By Jean-Claude Elias

Word Processing (WP) programmes on Personal Computers (PC) are replacing the traditional typewriter in most offices and even in households, reducing it to an endangered species.

In the past ten years, office equipment manufacturers have designed advanced typewriters with memory, sophisticated functions and a wide palette of type styles, in an attempt to catch up with PC based WP. Alas, for each step typewriters were taking, WP software took ten. Today's WP programmes are infinitely superior to even the best electronic typewriter and not much more expensive.

WP is, by large, the main reason why private users buy PCs. The three most popular programmes — MS-Word, WordPerfect and WordStar — share a market estimated at tens of millions of dollars a year. The possibilities they offer are enormous and a single operator generally, will never need all the features built in the system. They go from a simple letter to your grandpa's to a professionally edited and illustrated publication.

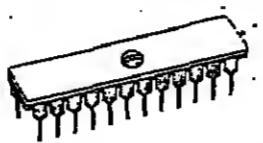
Among all these facilities that I do not plan to detail here, one is particularly impressive — the Spell Check. At any moment, while you are typing your text, you can require this function to check the correct spelling of your words. And it does it well, provided...

As it is always the case with computers, nothing is instant, immediate or straightforward. In order to use the Spell Check efficiently, you have to set it according to your needs. This means that you have to specify the way you want it to work.

For the English language for instance, you must indicate whether you want the English or the American spelling. You also have to decide if you want the words checked, while you type them or upon request only. You do not have to do this every time you use the programme, but only the first time. Unless of course you decide, later on, to change some point in the settings.

Another decision you have to make is to let the system verify or on the contrary, ignore all fully capitalised words or those that only start with a capital letter. This point is important since names of people and places do not follow strict rules and are therefore difficult to check. If the computer can tell whether Washington or Jordan are correctly written, for they are well known names, it won't "understand" names like Zerqa or Nabil for example.

chip talk



Software designers have thought of this and offer the user, within the Spell Check, the possibility to add his or her own words. If you type "Al Rai" and your Spell Check flashes on it, indicating that it didn't recognise the word, you just press one button that saves this new word on the hard disk, embedding it in the programme's internal dictionary. The next time you type "Al Rai" the WP won't consider it as a typing error.

As great as this can be, if you type a lot of foreign or special words, it can be very tiresome to keep adding new words to the WP dictionary. Nothing is perfect.

One thing the Spell Check won't do is to verify the grammar of your sentences. It will consider "I swim in the sea" correct for it can't make the difference between "see" and "sea" in such a case. This is where the Grammar Check comes in.

Introduced only three or four years ago, the Grammar Check is far from being perfect yet. While some software have a built-in grammar facility, Grammatik IV, an independent programme, can be added to your favourite WP in order to scrutinise your sentences. It works well, up to a certain point. More than actually correcting your grammar, it scans your text and, depending on its nature (business letter, personal letter, essay, poem, report,...) tells you how you are doing, if your paragraphs are too long, too short, if your sentences are easy to read and understand, if your punctuation is correct, and so on.

When the Grammar Check is fine tuned and becomes as performing as the Spell Check is now, writing will be a painless undertaking for those who had problems writing to their boss and begging for a raise. As for those dying to ask, the answer is yes — I write "Chip Talk" using one of these WP programmes, with its Spell Check, but not its Grammar Check.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

By Mohammad A. Shuaib

BELIEVE IT OR NOT

* Three cyclists from India-Adi B. Hukum, Jal P. Bapasa and Rustom J. Bhungara cycled the world in a period of 4 years, 5 months, 3 days covering 44,000 miles (Oct. 15, 1923-March 18-1928).

* * * * *

* The longest wrestling match — Alf Davey of England wrestled John Shea 11½ hours before a fall. (Michigan-1908)

* * * * *

* William Bolton of Harewood, England hiked 400 miles for exercise 10 times each year for the last 10 years of his life — until his death at the age of 80.

* * * * *

* Louis Cyr, a famous Canadian strongman lifted 545 pounds with one finger.

* * * * *

* A prize fight in Virginia City, Montana, between Con Orem and Hugh O'Neill lasted 193 rounds and was finally declared a draw because of darkness.

* * * * *

LET'S LEARN ARABIC

Useful expressions

- Take a seat.
- Come in!
- It's cheap.
- It's too expensive.
- That's all.
- You're right.
- You're wrong.
- It's funny.
- It's good.
- It's not true.
- I understand.
- Certainly.
- Certainly not.

Ijless.
Odkhol.
Rakhees.
Ghalijiddan.
Yakdi/Kifaya
Inta ala haq/Inta ala sawab.
Inta ghallan.
Shay mod/bik.
Kway/yes/Zain.
Chair sahib.
Ans fahsun.
Bit'a/keed.
Chair mo'akkad.

* * * * *

TIME FOR FUN

Nancy was having coffee with Helen. Nancy asked: "How do you know your husband loves you?" "He takes out the garbage every morning." "That's not love. That's good housekeeping." "My husband gives me all the spending money I need." "That's not love. That's generosity." "My husband never looks at other women." "That's not love. That's poor vision." "John always opens the door for me." "That's not love. That's good manners." "John kisses me even when I've eaten garlic and I have onions in my hair." "Now, that's love."

YOUR DREAMS INTERPRETED

WATER: (Clear) comfort and happiness; (dirty) sorrow and trouble; (stagnant) severe illness, probably ending with death; (very cold) beware of enemies; (hot) illness; (seeing in improbable places or circumstances) trouble and danger; (dried up or disturbed) an improvement in affairs; (gushing up from below) a sign of unexpected enemies; (carrying it in a sieve or other unlikely receptacle without spilling) much domestic trouble, disappointment, great losses; (another person doing so) good luck to the dreamer or to that person, or good luck to the dreamer in connection with that person; (drinking clear water) a lucky sign, comfort and satisfaction.

* * * * *

KEY: Receipt of money. (For young people) a good and handsome partner in life; (holding a key) settlement of business perplexities; (lost key) anger, worry and want.

* * * * *

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

Hatshepsut

The queen of the 18th Egyptian dynasty who died C. 1481. She was the daughter of Thutmose I. She reigned with her half-brother Thutmose III. She concentrated on keeping peace and building the country's economy. She constructed a magnificent temple at Deir El Bahr beside the Nile near Thebes. She was married to Thutmose II, to whose accession (1516 B.C.) she became the real ruler. On his death she acted as regent for his son, Thutmose III, then had herself crowned as pharaoh. Maintaining the fiction that she was male, she was represented with the regular pharaonic attributes, including a beard. To avenge himself from Hatshepsut, Thutmose III destroyed more than 100 statues of hers, besides other monuments erected in her great temple.

* * * * *

PUZZLES

Arrowwords

EACH arrow points to the beginning of the word answering the appropriately numbered clue. The words extend from arrow to arrow, the final letter of one word becoming the first letter of the next.

Write your solutions clockwise into the "target", and remember, only the twelve letters in the lower diagram are to be used.



0 Perspire.
1 Latin-American dance
2 Donkey.

A B E E L M R S S T U W



Visa to hell

By E. Yaghi

Abdul Rahman contemplated a pilgrimage to Mecca, but he had a problem. Who could he leave his Amaneh (trust with)? He thought and thought and finally said to himself, "of course, why didn't I think of Zaki before? He is a very religious man and a friend of mine as well. I am positive that my trust will be safe with him."

So, Abdul Rahman left his trust with Zaki and went for the pilgrimage in Mecca feeling quite secure that he left his property with the most suitable person that he knew. After a month's time and the successful completing of his holy journey, Abdul Rahman returned home and celebrated the occasion of his return by receiving guests who welcomed and congratulated him. When the visitors stopped coming and Abdul Rahman had a chance to recover from all the exciting events, he remembered the property that he had left for safe-keeping with his friend. "I must go and ask for the trust and also see how Zaki is doing."

So, on a bright sunny day when life seemed very promising, Abdul Rahman set out to visit his friend. "I am young, have a good job, have gone to Haj and now I want to marry. My trust will pay all my expenses and will enable me to settle down with a nice girl."

He approached his friend's house and knocked on the door. A young man answered and said: "Yes, may I help you?"

Abdul Rahman replied, "Salam aleikum! Is Zaki available? I am a friend of his and before I went to Haj, I left my Amaneh with him."

But Abdul Rahman became very disappointed when Zaki's son said that while Abdul Rahman was gone to the pilgrimage, his father had died and that he knew nothing about any trust or where his father may have put it. He had lost a friend and also his trust. Now he could not get married for a long time to come. What could he do? He decided at last to go and ask a sheikh's advice.

The sheikh told him: "Go to the Zam Zam Well in

Mecca, perform ablution and pray two rakat. If your friend is a member of Heaven, then his soul will appear to you and you can ask him whatever you want."

Abdul Rahman felt he had little choice so he went to Mecca, performed ablution and prayed two rakat. He waited and waited but Zaki's soul did not come. Again very disappointed, he returned home and went to the sheikh and reported what happened. "I did what you said but Zaki's soul did not appear."

The sheikh looked very thoughtful and concerned. His forehead knitted in wrinkles and with seeing effort he softly spoke: "You never know. Perhaps your friend is not of the community of Heaven. He might just be of the citizens of Hell. Go to a certain ancient well in Yemen, perform ablution and pray two rakat. If your friend is from Hell, he will appear to you."

What choice did he have? Abdul Rahman went to Yemen and to the designated well, made ablution and prayed two rakat. Not much later, Zaki's soul appeared to him. At first, Abdul Rahman almost choked. He felt the colour drain out of his face. His hands felt cold and they shook. He stuttered when he first spoke. "But, but, but, what I mean is, where did you put my Amaneh?"

A voice replied which seemed like a moaning echo, "I buried it under the apple tree in my backyard."

"But, why, O, Zaki. Why are you in hell? You were so good and religious? I even trusted you with all my worldly property!"

Before he disappeared forever, the apparition of nothingness said in a sorrowful echo: "Because I did not visit Selar Al Rahem (female relatives, especially those closest such as sisters, mother and daughters). So beware that you do not commit the same offense. All men's deeds are measured by their intentions. Religion is never just following specific rules and ignoring others. It is a lifestyle that enters the mind, soul and heart and becomes a practice that enlightens not only the doer, but the receiver as well."

Jurassic Park raises ethical questions

Jane Rissler, a biotechnology specialist with the National Wildlife Federation. "We have to start thinking of the impacts of that."

Some regulation of biotechnology does exist, but expected to reach \$4 billion in sales this year in the United States alone, up from \$350 million in 1986, according to the Commerce Department. The industry is also expected to grow from 15 to 20 per cent annually over the next five years.

Eric Christensen, a spokesman for the Biotechnology Industry Organisation, which represents many of the U.S. biotechnology companies, said public confidence in the new technology is vital to continued growth in the industry.

"We've never shied away from regulation," Mr. Christensen said. "We certainly want to make sure that it protects the needs of the public, but at the same time, doesn't kill the industry."

Jurassic Park, he said, was a nice piece of fiction and nothing more. "Jurassic Park has as much to do with biotechnology as Star Wars did to do with space technology," he added.

JTV CHANNEL 2

WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, July 29

8:30 Too Close For Comfort

Tenant's Anyone

9:10 Quantum Leap

10:00 News In English

10:20 Feature Film — Common Ground

Starring: Sean McCann and Richard Thomas

Friday, July 30

8:30 Head Of The Class

Mr. Moore gets romantic poetry messages in the mail and he tries to find the lady who sent them.

9:10 Reasonable Doubts

After Math

Kay gets raped by one of her friends, a policeman, and Tessa helps her in forcing the policeman to confess.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Echoe

Clair keeps studying at the University of Dublin, and doesn't care about her social life.

Saturday, July 31

8:30 Wacky World

9:00 Perspective

9:30 Varieties

10:00 News In English

10:20 Feature Film — In The Eyes of A Stranger

Starring: Richard Anderson and Justine Bateman

Sunday, Aug. 1

8:30 Step By Step

Lana runs in the elections for the presidency of the Student Council. Her campaign is a little weak so JT runs against her and wins.

9:10 The Trials Of Life.

10:00 News In English

10:20 French Series

Monday, Aug. 2

8:30 Golden Girls

Dorothy hires a nurse to take care of her mother Sophia. The girls do not like the nurse, so they ask her to quit, but she refuses.

9:10 Thirtysomething

Nancy's Mom

Nancy and Elliott are trying successfully to bridge the gap, and break the ice in their relationship, but Nancy's mother feels quite differently.

Wednesday, Aug. 4

8:30 Night Court

The Night Off

9:10 The Story of Hollywood

From "B" Movies to Blockbuster

This episode talks about the B movies.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Mini Series — Miles Of Midnight

Starring: Omar Sharif and Jane Seymour

Costa's wife and his brother find out all the secrets Costa is hiding.

Jagger at 50 — middle age catches up with Jumping Jack Flash



Mick Jagger

By Peter Millership
Reuter

LONDON — Mick Jagger, 50 this month and already a grandfather, may like to see himself as the Peter Pan of rock. But today's teenagers don't share their parents' adulation.

"He's married to that model Jerry Hall," said 14-year-old Annika Gregson. "He's probably 50-something. He looks it." Asked to name a record by the Rolling Stones, she echoed the response of all the teenagers canvassed: "I haven't got a clue."

Jagger, who reached his half century on July 26, is older than U.S. President Bill Clinton. His pouting, microphone-swinging swagger still fills stadiums, predominantly with middle-aged groovers.

"They want you to be like you were in 1969," Jagger once said in a rare aside on age, not his pet topic. "They want you to, because otherwise their youth goes with you. It's very selfish but it's understandable."

The dreamy Stones Hyde Park free concert, the stabbing to death of a youth by Hell's Angels at a concert in California, Jagger's arrest for drugs and his wedding to Nicaraguan beauty Bianca Perez Macias provided enduring memories for a generation.

"Mick Jagger was the sixties," said journalist Barry May, who wrote the first review of a Stones concert played in the backroom of a London pub. "People see him as an icon of that age. They see themselves reflected in him."

There was a time when

every British party or discotheque produced exhibitionists pantomiming Jagger's movements while his sybaritic lifestyle and lyrics on sex and drugs fascinated teenagers and shocked parents.

"If Jagger were an actor or a politician his half century would pass with relatively little comment," said writer Adam Sweeting. "But Jagger still carries the burden of the sixties generation that believed it was creating a new world order."

With the Beatles long gone and other 60s successes burnt out or forgotten, the Rolling Stones, now a colossal business enterprise, have become the grand old men of rock — an image that would have horrified the 60s rebels.

Rock critics are asking just how long Jagger can carry on strutting his stuff without looking ridiculous and when

he will come up with a new record to rival Rolling Stones classics such as *Satisfaction*, *Brown Sugar* and *Jumping Jack Flash*.

May, whose review fired the interest of the mainstream music press in the Stones which led to their success, said: "Now business clients are taken to Stones concerts as if they were Henley (rowing regatta) or Ascot (horse races)."

Like many of his generation, May asked: "Why does he need to do it? It can't be the money. There must be some sort of other need. Public adulation?"

At 26, Jagger famously said: "When I'm 33, I quit. That's the time when a man has to do something else. I don't want to be a rock and roll singer all my life." But at 50, Jagger's energy surprises even his most devoted fans.

His age is a sensitive issue and guests at a lavish party this month were told it was to celebrate Bastille Day and to dress in French Revolution style. It was definitely not the Mick Jagger birthday party.

Despite jeers about

"wrinkles" in the popular

press, Jagger's love life and

his musical forays still grab

headlines and his ageing

army of fans has remained

loyal.

"Even if Jagger is beginning to look a bit daft gyrating up there in his padded

pedal pushers at 50, he be-

longs to all our yesterdays."

said columnist Val Hennessy,

adding that he needed an

"intelligent and substantial

biographer."

She needed no prompting.

"Me for instance. Here I am

Mick, the girl in the polka-

dot hotpants who was thrown

off the stage at the Hyde Park

free concert."

London Theatre Festival offers the unusual, and the weird

By Matt Wolf
The Associated Press

LONDON — In a city suffused with theatre, doing something different demands long leaps of the imagination.

For the London International Festival of Theatre (LIFT), which has just ended this year's run, it means taking the audience grocery shopping, performing a Spanish classic in Punjabi or presenting Chinese rock 'n' roll at the highest decibel level possible.

There's nothing traditional to most LIFT events, beyond the sight of an ever-growing public opening itself up to new forms of theatre even when the language — literally and figuratively — is often

unclear.

"LIFT has always been about what theatre is, where it can happen, who can be involved, and who goes to it," festival co-director Rose Wende Fenton said in an interview.

It can be a significant launching pad. Britons got a first taste of the singular style of Canadian director Robert Lepage when the 1987 LIFT mounted his six-hour *Dragons Trilogy*. His Midsummer Night's Dream, staged in a pool of mud, was a sensation at London's national theatre last year.

Death And The Maiden, Chilean dramatist Ariel Dorfman's widely acclaimed play about torture, got its first British exposure at a reading co-sponsored by LIFT.

"It's not just about text. It's going right back to basics. It's stretching the form," Fenton said of the biennial event that she and Lucy Neal founded in 1981.

In addition to traditional playhouses, sites this year included an East End market, the grounds of the National Maritime Museum in south-east London with its classical loggia facing across Greenwich Park and the boating ponds of Regent's Park.

"Traditionally, international theatre is staged for a narrow elitist audience. We're trying to draw a much wider audience by staging events in unusual places," Fenton said.

The lively and appreciative audience — many of them on bikes — included actress

Sigourney Weaver, wife of the play's director Jim Simpson. A passing heckler looked skeptical when a LIFT staff member informed him that he was disrupting "a performance."

Regent's Park also saw another of LIFT's odder performers: 42-year-old Bobby Baker, a north London housewife and mother of two whose How To Shop: The Lecture is the second in a five-part series, *Daily Life*.

Her show offered helpful hints on manoeuvring a shopping cart through a busy grocery store, making toffee apples and finding the link between parsley and humility.

Baker's aim is lofty, indeed — to find in mundane events the seeds of something spir-

itual. It's also the only LIFT show to offer free food in the form of a homemade — and rather soggy — garlic crooutou.

More conventional fare gives theatrical classics a fresh, or unexpected, airing. Chekhov's *Three Sisters* was the source text for *Brace Up*, presented by New York's celebrated avant-garde Wooster Group, film actor Willem Dafoe among them.

As directed by Elizabeth LeCompte, Dafoe's wife, this Chekhov steeped in off Broadway attitude: The play is chopped up, rearranged, and much of it told on video.

Musical snatches from Tchaikovsky's opera *Eugene Onegin* and even *Blowin' In The Wind* punctuate the text,

and the youngest sister Irina is played by an actress (Beatrice Roth) old enough to be all three sisters' mother.

Federico Garcia Lorca's

Yerma, a fiery Spanish dra-

ma about a woman's infertil-

ity, gained in exoticism what

Western audiences lost in

comprehension as it was per-

formed in Punjabi under the

direction of Neelam Man-

singh Chowdhry, from India.

In Chowdhry's staging,

Yerma is no repressed barren

woman but the earthy

equivalent of an Ibsen

heroine, stilled by a loveless

marriage. Stage images of a

burning rope and blood-spattered sheet spoke volumes in themselves.

No less intriguing were two

new works from China,

Red Noise was a rambling account of life in present-day Peking related by Australian raconteur Geremie Barnie, Singer and so-called "maverick philosopher". He Yong provided the high-decibel musical interludes.

The Chengdu Theatre Company's *Ripples Across Stagnant Water*, directed and adapted by Zhi Li Fan from Li Jieren's novel of misplaced love, is the first contemporary Chinese play to be seen in Britain. (Previous cultural events from China have been limited to musicians or acrobats.)

Costing \$1.8 million drawn from corporate and private sponsors, this year's LIFT aimed to play to 100,000 people.

Boyz director says he's unspoiled by success

By Matt Spetalnick
Reuter

LOS ANGELES — He was barely out of film school when he became the youngest moviemaker and first black ever nominated for one of Hollywood's highest accolades — the Oscar for best director.

But less than a year later, 25-year-old John Singleton — who keeps one foot in the hood (inner city neighbourhood) and the other in Beverly Hills — is out to prove that he hasn't been spoiled by success.

After taking the movie world by storm with his first film, *Boyz N The Hood*, the brash young director-screenwriter is about to release his

second project, *Poetic Justice*, starring pop superstar Janet Jackson in her screen debut.

"I think this film is a graduation from *Boyz*," he said in a recent interview. "It shows my growth as a filmmaker."

Indeed life has changed dramatically for Singleton since he burst onto the scene at age 22 with a script about his old gang-ridden South Central Los Angeles neighbourhood written as a film student at the University of Southern California.

He sold it to Columbia Pictures a month after graduation and convinced studio executives he was the only person who could direct it.

Made for a mere \$6 mil-

lion, *Boyz* grossed more than six times as much as the box office. A major reason for its success was it attracted whites as well as blacks with its gritty tale of coming of age in a world of crime, drugs and disintegrating families.

With the instant fame generated by last year's Oscar nomination, Singleton has come of age as well.

He has learned to move with ease in the world of studio chieftains and enjoys talking shop with fellow directors such as Steven Spielberg, Francis Ford Coppola and Spike Lee. He owns a shiny new car and is considered hip enough to occasionally introduce rap music on MTV.

Although he still ventures

back to south central to visit family and friends, he now lives in Baldwin Hills, a more upscale black neighbourhood.

Even as he relishes his first taste of success, Singleton insists he has not lost his street-smart perspective.

"That's what makes me special. I've got to maintain that edge," he said.

Like *Boyz N The Hood*, Singleton's latest project is filled with the raw images collected first-hand from a life of growing up on the mean streets.

But while *Boyz* was all hard-edged drama focussing on gun-packing gang members, *Poetic Justice* is being touted as an inner-city ro-

mance.

"I thought about what's happening to all the brothers out there," Singleton said. "They're killing each other. But what happens to a girl when her boyfriend gets murdered?"

It was Singleton's idea to cast Jackson in the lead role of Justice, a tough-talking hairdresser who writes poetry to cope with her loss.

He bristles at the inevitable questions about her shortage of acting experience. "Janet can do more than just sing. She's a renaissance woman," he declared.

But Singleton had to work hard to get her prepared. He assigned her classic films to watch, asked her to gain weight and had her work a

day in a south central beauty parlour.

Realising that growing up in a mansion with superstar brother Michael may have left her something less than streetwise, Singleton arranged a crash course for Jackson by introducing her to women he knew from the inner city.

Some Columbia executives fretted privately that \$13.5 million was too much to risk on the young filmmaker. But Singleton, speaking with the self-assurance of a director twice his age, insisted they were betting on a sure thing.

"This movie is gonna make money. It's in their best interest to do business with me," he said flatly.

Singleton said he doesn't

expect the film's opening to be marred by the kind of gang-related violence that broke out at theatres around the country when *Boyz* arrived.

The day the verdicts were returned last year in the trial of four white police officers in the beating of Rodney King, *Poetic Justice* was shooting in suburban Simi Valley.

Singleton jumped into his car and rushed to the courthouse, where he vented his anger before the television cameras as riots erupted in South Central.

He chose to continue shooting straight through the riots, a decision representative of his single-minded approach to moviemaking.

Singleton grew up in an apartment next to a drive-in theatre and, from early childhood, was able to look out his window and see movies on a 70-foot (21-metre) screen. "It got my head going," he said.

He credits his father with teaching him to love a good story and binged on movies as an escape as he grew older. But he now sees the grim, graffiti-covered streets of his home turf as his main source of inspiration.

Away from the set, Singleton admits he's still a kid at heart. He reads comic books, plays video games and listens to loud rap music. Though still single, he became the father of a baby girl born late last year.

Underwater opera makes a splash

By Natasha Brown
Reuter

TROIA, Portugal — The audience at Michel Redolfi's underwater opera *Crysalis* don't just listen to it, they immerse themselves in it.

In a large swimming pool under a starry sky, music from a synthesiser wafts through the water from submerged speakers.

Two metres (six feet six inches) under water a percussive in scuba-diving gear plays bronze chimes. A singer on the edge of the pool adds her voice, which is also projected through the underwater speakers.

"This is an underwater opera where you hear what is going on through your whole body — it is your whole body which will be listening," the French director tells the audience before the show begins.

The audience of 200 swim around the pool to find a comfortable position — realising that they can hear the sound only by submerging themselves.

Members of the audience

float round the pool on rubber mats duck underneath the surface for enhanced sound, or dive underwater to stare at the percussionist through the goggles on the pool side.

"For one hour the music puts the audience into science fiction," said Redolfi. "It is like in a dream — but it is real so it's a sort of utopia," said Redolfi, who is director of the Nice-based Centre for Sound Creation (CIR) and has been directing underwater concerts since 1981.

Crysalis had its premiere in Grenoble in November last year.

Percussionist Alex Grillo, who has been working with Redolfi since 1989, remains underwater throughout the performance, tapping out on the bronze chimes which vibrate through the water.

He said the biggest problem in Troia, the second time the opera has been performed, was heating the water to a comfortable temperature for the audience to withstand 66 minutes of sonic vibrations.

Although the performance

The miracle of new dental surgery techniques

By Katica Sabet
CAIRO — Technology has made great strides in medicine, particularly in the field of dental surgery. Gone are the days when dentures were kept in a glass by the bedside. With a firm embedding of a false tooth now possible, the use of implants is becoming widespread. Indeed, with an implant, it is possible to forget you have a false tooth.

Dr. Mahmoud Hosni started as a specialist in orthodontics and switched to maxillo-facial surgery. "I was a young dentist when a young Eritrean came to consult me. He had been shot in the face, and his jawbone had been replaced by a rib," he explained. An X-ray revealed that the implanted bone was being reabsorbed and would eventually disappear. "Until then," the doctor said, "I had been quite confident in my work, but I suddenly realised that I was incapable of restoring to this poor young man the correct use of his mandible."

The doctor went to the U.S. to specialise in maxillo-facial surgery, which involves the use of dental implants, problems of the articulation of the jawbone and correction of anomalies and traumas related to the jawbone and the face. "I realised just how much I did not know," he explained. After seven years of work at Harvard and other American universities, he returned to Egypt to practice what he had learned.

Dr. Hosni specialises in the bone structure of the face; plastic surgery deals with other tissues. "It is imperative that all of the facial bones be in perfect condition to maintain general health and avoid deterioration that could give rise to problems such as migraines, digestive disorders or speech impediments," the doctor explained.

Implants are thin, often perforated, metal cylinders that are inserted into a cavity made in the jawbone. After

insertion, the gum is stitched up. Within three to four months, bone surrounds the cylinder and grips it perfectly. If the cylinder is perforated, it is possible to see bony matter penetrating through and anchoring the implant even more firmly to the jawbone.

The hollow cylinder houses a pivot. Systems supporting the false teeth can be screwed or locked into it. The cylinder/pivot system is extremely firm and, if necessary, can replace a whole set of teeth. Implants are often used in cases where there are not enough molars for a bridge to be fitted. One or two implants enable false teeth to be fitted in replacement of molars. This ensures normal mastication on each side, which means there is no deterioration on the side where there was previously no mastication.

Dr. Hosni has a 98-per cent success rate with implants on the lower jaw and a 65-per cent success rate on the upper

jaw. "I am looking to increase the success rate for the upper jaw by a preliminary graft of bone onto the upper jaw, which is often very thin," Dr. Hosni added.

Implants had a rocky start. "Fifteen years ago dental implants were actually very problematic," he explained. "A lot has changed recently." He says problems of rejection no longer exist. "Pure titanium is an exceptionally bio-compatible substance not used in surgery 10 years ago," he explained. "Surgical steel implants were often rejected, but with titanium we no longer have problems."

Dental implants are not the only area of intervention for Dr. Hosni. Bone grafts can correct a prognathous profile, or badly aligned jaws. This technique also involves endoscopic examination of the jawbone articulation.

Stress often causes people to clench their jaws and grind their teeth, resulting in wear and damage of the articula-

tion. Temporal-mandibular articulation controls the movement of the jawbones for mastication and connects the lower jaw to the skull.

Surgery on the temporal-mandibular articulation is becoming more frequent. "We have the instruments required to perform this surgery in Egypt now, and I have conducted one successful operation," Dr. Hosni said. "One of the important advantages of these new techniques is that they do leave scars, as in the past."

Temporal-mandibular articulation is often the source of migraines, whose diagnosis was not previously possible. "In many countries, people were given valium after being wrongly diagnosed," the doctor said. "Now, with the C.T. Scan, Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) and arthroscopy, this articulation can be minutely examined."

The articulation is smaller than the one in a finger, and its disk can be dislocated, displaced or worn out. "If this is the case," Dr. Hosni said, "sharp pains will radiate through the hind part of it, which is full of nerves and blood vessels."

MRI produces an image of the internal tissues by using the movement of hydrogen molecules in the tissues. The articulation can be localised and then examined by a fine arthroscope (1.7 mm in diameter) linked up to a television camera. Surgery takes place through a small incision.

Dr. Hosni uses a computer to carry out some of the more specialised interventions for correcting deformities of facial proportions. "There are optimal dimensions and angles of the different parts of the face. By entering data



Using modern equipment such as computers, magnetic resonance imaging and arthroscopy, Dr. Hosni is preparing to perform surgery on the bones of the face.

on the structure of a patient's face into the computer, it is possible to analyse 170 angles between the base of the skull and the different structures of the face."

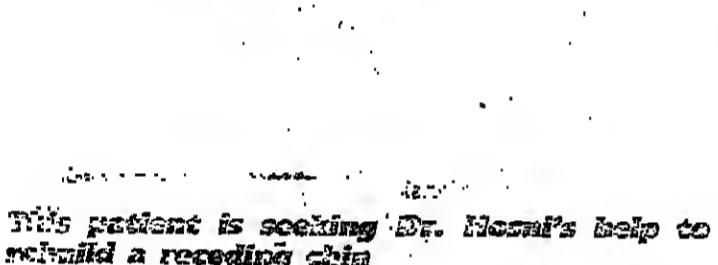
"Apartment from the aesthetic value, this examination identifies anomalies of the bone and its development, preventing long-term general health problems," Dr. Hosni said. The phases required for corrective surgery are superimposed over the lines showing the current facial structure. In this way, a patient can see how he will look after the operation.

According to Dr. Hosni, the diagnostic and preventive nature of his work is crucial to general health and especially important for the young. "Children may inherit the same facial defects as their parents — such as a prominent jawbone. The computer will tell me at what age the jawbone of a child will start developing abnormally. I can then intervene to stop the deformity."

In one extraordinary case, Dr. Hosni treated a 17-year-old boy who, as a child, had undergone an ablation of part of his lower jaw, which controlled skeletal growth in the face. He had grown up with a withered, blocked jaw, which meant he could be fed only liquids. He also had to sleep sitting up to avoid being suffocated by his tongue. Until now, he had been afraid to look in a mirror.

Dr. Hosni successfully reconstructed the temporal-maxillary articulation by using part of the sterno-clavicular articular. The lower jaw was extended by 56 millimetres, and normal mastication, respiration and speech functions were restored. In a subsequent operation, he will have another bone graft to give him a normal chin. It was the first time this technique had been used to correct this particular deformity.

World News Link.



This patient is seeking Dr. Hosni's help to reinforce a receding chin



After surgery, the patient's features are balanced

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

PRODUCE DEPT.

By Dorothy B. Martin

ACROSS

1. Felt driver
2. — for one's money
3. Notebook; abbr.
4. Set on fire
5. Thin in tone
6. Globe
7. Swear word
8. Play's mother
9. One or another
10. Out
11. Shampoo
12. Spin
13. Sea bird
14. Tamed
15. Sane
16. Cosas —
17. Big — of a horse
18. Family of a highly notable
24. Meadow
41. Bragged
42. Tangled
43. Mr. (WVII)
44. Ms. (WVII)
45. Mrs. (WVII)
46. Ms. (WVII)
47. Ms. (WVII)
48. Ms. (WVII)
49. Ms. (WVII)
50. Ms. (WVII)
51. Conrad's victim
52. M. (WVII)
53. Houses in Huerta
54. Dutch commune
55. Mubarak's city
56. M. (WVII)
57. M. (WVII)
58. Ford
59. Useful, old style
60. Scarlet
61. Scarlet
62. Scarlet
63. Troubles
64. Custom group
65. Sidney Poitier
66. Lucy Dee Jim
67. Canteen
68. Canteen
69. Canteen
70. Canteen
71. Canteen
72. Canteen
73. Taxis on the —
74. Ottoman Empire
75. Official
76. Throne of
77. Endearment
78. Refuse to pay a debt
79. Piece on a book
80. Pocket
81. — Miserables
82. Person
83. Human
84. Biblical patriarch
85. Park, Col
86. Town or Blanc
87. Extravagant
88. Custom
89. Delta of song
90. Custom
91. Custom
92. Delta of song
93. Zephirus
94. School boy/girl
95. G. B.
96. God of war
97. Apparatus
98. Spanish partner
99. Evergreen
100. Evergreen
101. Evergreen
102. Evergreen
103. Younger
104. Ammoniac
105. Sheep
106. Sheep
107. Sheep
108. Sheep
109. Sheep
110. Sheep
111. Sheep
112. Sheep
113. Camerographer's volume
114. Want to find a thrill myself
115. Hostess Perle
116. Pitcher Ryan
117. Hostess Perle
118. Pitcher Ryan
119. Hostess Perle
120. Lab burner
121. Regions
122. Plump
123. Congers
124. School boy/girl
125. G. B.
126. God of war
127. Apparatus
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Russian caviar area faces pollution threat

By Anatoly Verbin
Reuter

ASTRAKHAN, Russia — The Astrakhan gas and chemical plant, rising from a labyrinth of pipes in the southern Russian steppe, was once hailed by Soviet propaganda as a model of 20th century construction.

Today, ecologists look at the vast complex and question the cost of keeping the region supplied with fuel at prices that would be the envy of many other areas.

The remote facility, 140 kilometres north of the Caspian Sea, has a worrying history of minor environmental mishaps.

General neglect by unqualified workers, many of whom were prisoners doing forced labour, was blamed for chemical leaks that turned the grass yellow for miles around in 1987, only a year before construction was completed.

So far, there has been no major pollution in the area near the mouth of the River Volga — famed for its black caviar and sturgeon. But ecologists say it could only be a matter of time before their worst fears are realised.

"There are thousands of (ecological) mines planted there," said Yuri Chukov, Astrakhan's senior official in charge of environmental protection. "The plant, whose potential annual output of gasoline, diesel oil and liquefied gas could satisfy the whole of Scandinavia for five years, is the backbone of the local economy. It has 35,000 workers, including those employed by related enterprises."

Owned by Astrakhangazprom, a unit of the Russian gas monopoly Gazprom, it was built between 1976 and 1986 and hastily inaugurated in time for a visit to Astrakhan by then Soviet Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhikov.

The decade of construction was trumpeted by communist propaganda as an example to be followed elsewhere. But Mr. Chukov said the long-term effects of the plant's activity had not yet been studied properly.

Last month, one worker was killed and two badly poisoned when hydrogen sulphide leaked from an underground storage area because of their own carelessness, Mr. Chukov said.

The incident took place at one of 15 caverns made by small nuclear explosions. The secret explosions, aimed at creating storage space for gas condensate and linked with molten residue, were conducted across the former Soviet Union.

Mr. Chukov said that, unlike in the other parts of the country, the Astrakhan caverns, formed at

a depth of 1,000 metres, had failed to keep their shape.

"They have been shrinking in size and lost their volume," he said, adding that some had been taken out of action.

Mr. Chukov said there had been no increase in radiation levels so far but he was concerned by the threat of air and water pollution.

The plant was not exceeding maximum permitted levels only because it was not working at full capacity.

"This deposit can and should be used. But each deposit of natural resources should be used intelligently and this is not the case here," the ecologist said.

Astrakhan Governor Anatoly Guzhvin said the plant's failure to meet ecological requirements and its ageing equipment preveoted it from producing more.

The plant's first, and so far only, operational line produced 2.5 billion cubic metres of gas, 1.5 million tonnes of gas condensate and one million tonnes of sulphur in 1992, according to the Interfax News Agency.

It also produced 227,000 tonnes of petrol and the same amount of diesel fuel. Alexander Saushin, the plant's commercial director, declined to confirm the Interfax figures, saying they were a commercial secret.

An advertising brochure put the plant's current capacity at about double the Interfax output figures.

Mr. Saushin said a second operational line was 90 per cent ready but the collapse of the centralised Soviet economy had prevented it from being completed.

"They told us a series of nuclear explosions would take place near our settlement, in the interests of the national economy," said Nikolai Danilov, the 55-year-old head of administration in the settlement, part of Yakutia in northeastern Russia.

"They told us to leave our homes and go out onto the street with our children and cattle at 6 a.m. on Oct. 5, 1976," he said.

"Suddenly we felt the ground under our feet shake violently — it was like an earthquake — it came three waves and was over in a few seconds.

"We weren't afraid because we thought our government and our (Communist) Party would never do anything to harm us," he said. "We returned to our homes. Everything seemed fine."

The people were told the explosions were safe. They recall the assurances with resentment and a deep sense of betrayal.

After the explosion and fire at the Chernobyl nuclear reactor in 1986 — which the Ukrainian authorities say claimed 8,000 lives — they began to fear that they too could be the victims of

Castro shuns 'mad' reform, prefers cautious change

By Pascal Fletcher

Reuter

HAVANA — Cuba's president Fidel Castro, declaring he will neither cling to ideological dogma nor rush ahead with "mad" reforms, has outlined practical but cautious measures to try to pull the island out of economic decline.

He has said that the government was opening up more of the communist-ruled Caribbean island's economy to foreign investment and would remove a ban on Cubans owning convertible currency. This last move was eagerly awaited by many Cubans.

Mr. Castro, speaking in the eastern city of Santiago de Cuba,

said the bleak economic reality facing his country had forced the government to make "concessions" as far as strict interpretation of socialist model that had existed in the former Soviet Union.

"That means that we won't be dogmatic, neither dogmatic nor mad," he said. He added "madness" would be to follow the example of the former Soviet Union, where reforms originally aimed at improving socialism there had ended up by destroying it.

"We mustn't take desperate or adventurous steps," he said.

Foreign diplomats in Havana

said the latest measures appeared

to indicate the Cuban leadership

was increasingly prepared to move away from the kind of rigid

socialist model that had existed

in the former Soviet Union.

But it was equally clear the Cuban reforms fell well short of introducing western-style market-oriented policies. They addressed the island's economic problems, not its political system.

"However difficult the circumstances are, we can't destroy

the party, the state, the government or the history of the country," Mr. Castro said.

He made his speech at a ceremony marking the 40th anniversary of a 1953 guerrilla attack led by him. The Moncada barracks attack failed but was the prelude to Cuba's 1959 revolution that ousted right-wing dictator Fulgencio Batista.

Other measures announced by

Mr. Castro included allowing

more Cubans living abroad to

visit family members on the is-

land and boosting tourism and

other sectors of the economy that earn valuable hard currency.

"Increasing our hard currency income is a vital necessity for

us," he said.

This need was all the more

urgent because Cuba's imports

this year would fall to a mere \$1.7

billion compared with just over

\$8 billion in 1989, the last year of

normal trade with the former

Soviet Union, Mr. Castro said.

He added the "tremendous

blow" of the loss of trade and aid

with the former Soviet Bloc

had been made worse this year by

a disastrous sugar harvest and a

fall in world prices for many

Cuban exports like nickel and

seafood.

Referring to the widespread popular expectation that had surrounded his speech, he said he had no miracle cures to offer for the economic crisis, which is squeezing Cuba's nearly 11 million people with shortages of fuel, food and consumer goods.

He acknowledged that allowing Cubans to own hard currency could create privileges that do not fit our strict ideas of equality."

Such inequalities could occur

because not all Cubans would

have access to hard currency either through their work or

through remittances from family members abroad.

"We don't have any choice but to adapt our minds to these realities," Mr. Castro said.

He said the government intended to create and eventually issue a convertible national currency. But until this happened, Cubans would be allowed to spend the hard currency they had at special shops designated for this.

Foreign diplomats said the government would probably be able to recoup at least part of the estimated thousands of dollars circulating illegally in the black market economy.

UNDP issues 1993 Human Development Report

By Katherine Rath
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Wednesday published the Arabic version of the Human Development Report for 1993. The report was presented at a ceremony held at the University of Jordan by Dr. Ali Attia, assistant administrator and regional director for the Bureau of Arab States, UNDP, New York.

The regional launching of the report took place under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Ben Talal who gave a keynote statement.

Other speakers were Her Royal Highness Princess Basma, Dr. Sabah-Eddin Bakraji, under secretary-general of the United Nations and executive secretary of ESCWA, Leila Sharaf, member of the Upper House of Parliament, who was representing the Arab Thought Forum, and Dr. Ziad Fariz, minister of planning.

The Human Development Report for 1993, which was the forth annual report issued by

the UNDP, has been prepared by a team of top economists led by Mahbub Ul Haq, former finance and planning minister of Pakistan, now special adviser to the UNDP administrator; it is published by Oxford University Press.

The 1993 report focuses on the importance of popular and democratic participation for human development. According to Dr. Attia, the report "puts people at the very centre of development." It stresses the need for investment in human resources and for people's participation in their development.

The report reveals that "fewer than 10 per cent of the world's people participate fully in political, economic, social and cultural life," which implies that the vast majority of the population lacks control over their own lives.

"Jobless growth," exclusion of minorities and centralised power are cited as major targets for change by the report.

The report was last month published in English and French.

Yakutian community haunted by nuclear past

By Fiona Fleck

Reuter

TAAS-YURAKH, Russia —

People in this remote cattle-herding community remember vividly the day 17 years ago, when a team of geologists from Moscow swooped down in helicopters.

"They told us a series of nuclear explosions would take place near our settlement, in the interests of the national economy," said Lt. Chomchoyev.

"Maybe this generation will be fine. But how do we know future generations will be healthy?"

Seven underground nuclear explosions were carried out up to seven kilometres from Taas-Yurakh to measure oil and gas deposits there, according to Lieutenant Anatoly Chomchoyev, head of civil defence in Yakutia.

"They told us to leave our homes and go out onto the street with our children and cattle at 6 a.m. on Oct. 5, 1976," he said.

"Suddenly we felt the ground under our feet shake violently — it was like an earthquake — it came three waves and was over in a few seconds.

"We weren't afraid because we thought our government and our (Communist) Party would never do anything to harm us," he said. "We returned to our homes. Everything seemed fine."

The people were told the explosions were safe. They recall the assurances with resentment and a deep sense of betrayal.

After the explosion and fire at the Chernobyl nuclear reactor in

radioactive contamination.

Teams of experts sent to the area found radiation levels in Taas-Yurakh "normal" and no unusual incidence of cancer or other illnesses associated with radiation.

The results did not reassure the locals.

"We should be granted a similar status to the victims of Chernobyl," said Mr. Danilov.

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After the explosion and fire at the Chernobyl nuclear reactor in

1986 — which the Ukrainian authorities say claimed 8,000 lives — they began to fear that they too could be the victims of

lieve they may also have been used for unsanctioned nuclear weapons testing.

"In 1963 the United States and the Soviet Union agreed to ban nuclear tests for military purposes

apart from in Semipalatinsk (Kazakhstan) and on Novaya Zemlya," said Boris Golubov, a Moscow-based parliamentary group investigating underground nuclear explosions.

"Nuclear explosions in space, on blasts up to 2,000 metres below ground could not possibly reach the surface," he said.

"The only place left was underground — and that's where peaceful nuclear explosions were carried out in the interests of the national economy". No one will

confirm this, but it is possible the military used the explosions for nuclear experiments," he said.

Yakutia, one of many regions targeted for the explosions, was

regarded as particularly suitable and covered in permafrost, beneath which there is a dense layer of virtually impenetrable clay.

"They thought the radiation

from blasts up to 2,000 metres

below ground could not possibly

reach the surface," said Mr. Golubov.

"But up to 10 years later in some places dangerous

levels of radiation appeared on

the surface."

In Yakutia there are two dan-

ger spots. One is a few kilometres

from Taas-Yurakh and measures

2,000 microroentgen an hour —

more than 200 times the permitted

level.

It was recently sealed in a

cement sarcophagus and fenced

Economy

FAO report says farmers hard hit by drop in world agricultural prices

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Farmers have been hard hit by the 26 per cent drop in agricultural export prices over the past 12 years and their lot is not expected to improve before the end of the century, according to a report published Tuesday.

The U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) said farmers in developing countries, who suffer most from falling agricultural prices, have seen their prices drop 39 per cent against 19 per cent for richer nations.

Between 1980 and 1992, the price drop affected mostly coffee and sugar — which were down 70

and 60 per cent respectively — and rubber which dropped nearly 50 per cent, according to the report.

"This trend is having dire consequences in developing nations, preventing their economies from earning the foreign exchange they need for their overall development," said FAO Director General Edward Saouma.

Advances in agricultural technology are primarily responsible for the drop in prices between 1980 and 1982, according to the report.

Agricultural production will outpace demand, which is ex-

pected to grow by only 1.6 per cent during this decade against 2.0 per cent for the 1980s. Production is projected to decline only slightly, from 1.8 per cent annually in the 1980s to 1.7 per cent in the 1990s.

Rich countries' growth in demand is slowing due to low population growth and gluts on the market while growth in developing countries is on the rise because of economic expansion and the greater responsiveness of demand to income growth, the report said.

The FAO also reported that the growth of trade in the major

food and agricultural commodities is expected to decline from 2.8 per cent annually in the 1980s to 1.3 per cent in the 1990s, well below estimates for merchandise trade.

World coffee output in 1992-93 was forecast to reach 57 tonnes, a six per cent drop from the previous year, while cocoa production is expected to rise by nearly four per cent to 2.38 million tonnes.

Sugar output was projected to edge up to a record 116.5 million tonnes while cotton production would fall, according to the report.

The FAO also reported that the growth of trade in the major

Gore sees government job cuts exceeding 100,000

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. Vice President Al Gore predicted the Clinton administration's effort to streamline government would cost more than 100,000 federal workers their jobs, the Washington Post reported Wednesday.

The newspaper quoted Mr. Gore as saying the workforce cuts were inevitable and would exceed President Bill Clinton's initial pledge to trim the bureaucracy by 100,000 jobs.

"I think there is general agreement that in certain categories there are too many people in the federal government," Mr. Gore was quoted as saying at lunch with Washington Post reporters and editors Tuesday.

He said the overall reduction would be "somewhat larger... than the 100,000 we originally talked about."

Mr. Gore is heading the administration's national performance review, an initiative to make bureaucracy more efficient, which is due to be delivered to Mr. Clinton by Sept. 7.

The newspaper said Mr. Gore did not specify where the job cuts would be made, but said they would be carried out through attrition.

Growing anger in Yugoslavia as inflation bites deep

BELGRADE (R) — The elderly, well-dressed man sobs quietly at the back of the Belgrade store after discovering he would need his entire monthly pension to buy a new toothbrush.

A woman in her 70s fills her basket in a supermarket with goods and sneaks out past a cashier busy with another customer. Bystanders notice, but say nothing.

Two businessmen eat for lunch in a restaurant order their meals. By the time they come to pay, the price has risen by 50 per cent.

These and similar stories appear regularly in the Belgrade press as people in rump Yugoslavia try to cope with nightmarish inflation of 20 per cent a day, result of civil war, sanctions and mismanagement by the communist government.

The growing crisis is causing bewilderment and growing anger among a population accustomed to periods of economic hardship during four decades of communism.

The inflation rate is already being described as the worst since that in Germany between the wars, when the mark fell at one point to 4,200,000,000,000 to the dollar.

Last week a National Bank official was reported as saying a redenomination of the dinar, dropping three noughts from the currency, could be expected in late September.

It would be the fourth redenomination since World War II, the third since 1990. The last one took place on July 1.

There have also been three devaluations of the dinar this year, the last, by over 80 per cent, a week ago.

Some of Belgrade's larger stores have already introduced their own unofficial redenomination, dropping three zeroes, as their computers and cash registers cannot cope with so many noughts.

Shops change the prices at least twice a day, in the morning and the afternoon, moving them up anywhere between 100 and 700 per cent. Tanjug News Agency reported Tuesday.

In many shops this is an empty exercise since by the afternoon most shelves are empty as people buy everything in sight while their money has some value, or speculators snap up goods for resale at a profit.

The crisis is increasingly driving ordinary people to deal in currency on the black market.

A 40-year-old architect who

tried it out reported earning a profit of \$12 in hard currency in a few hours of buying and selling German marks for dinars on a busy downtown street.

Such easy pickings have not surprisingly attracted a growing number of hard-core criminals and introduced an element of violence in a city awash with arms from two years of civil war.

One man, who declined to give his name, said that while dealing in a popular money-changing street he had been approached by two men who pulled guns and demanded his takings.

When he in turn pulled out a hand grenade and threatened to let it off, the two gunmen left muttering warnings that he would be in trouble if he showed his face again.

The crisis has already prompted thousands of car, metal and construction workers to go on strike, and unions have called a general strike for Aug. 5.

An organisation representing Serbia's 1.2 million pensioners, who are worst hit by the inflation, is threatening to bring the elderly out onto the streets in protests that would include refusing to pay rent, water or electricity bills.

But a 68-year-old woman pensioner, recalling previous attempts to organise mass protests, commented:

"I don't understand what people are waiting for. To think that in a city to two million, not even 50,000 will come out onto the streets to protest. All that remains is for us to die. But we won't even have enough money for a funeral."

France, Continental announce alliance

HOUSTON, Texas (AFP) — Air France and the U.S.-based Continental Airlines announced Tuesday they would form an alliance that would involve coordinated schedules in hopes of attracting new customers.

Under the agreement, the airlines would share terminals and advertising costs, and would issue single tickets to make it easier for customers to connect to Air France through Continental's hubs in Newark, New Jersey and Houston, Texas.

"We are strategically very well placed to cooperate," said

Bernard Attalai, chairman of Groupe Air France in a statement. "The Air France group and Continental both have important domestic and international networks."

The agreement will begin to become effective on Nov. 1 and will be fully implemented by April 1, 1994, the statement said.

Other airlines have come up with similar arrangements. Northwest and KLM Royal Dutch Airlines have signed a similar accord, as has USAir and British Airways.

Continental's alliance with Air

France will give it access to 106 airports in Europe, while Air France will gain 197 destinations in 28 countries served by Continental.

The French Transport and Tourism Minister Bernard Bosson confirmed earlier in Paris that there was a "new plan to get Air France moving again" despite the deteriorating financial situation of other worldwide airlines.

Continental Airlines emerged from bankruptcy protection in late April after a court accepted its reorganisation plan based on a \$450 million investment by Air Canada and U.S. investors.

York City, as well as other airports across the country where Continental aircraft may land.

The French Transport and Tourism Minister Bernard Bosson confirmed earlier in Paris that there was a "new plan to get Air France moving again" despite the deteriorating financial situation of other worldwide airlines.

Continental, which is strong in the United States and in Asia, has had limited access to European airports, the two companies said.

The alliance with Continental will give Air France access to the Newark airport, outside New

York City, as well as other airports across the country where Continental aircraft may land.

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Continental, which

Economy

Ruble reform causes major political setback for Yeltsin

By Sergei Shargorodsky
The Associated Press

MOSCOW — The explosive ruble reform launched by Russia's Central Bank has damaged President Boris Yeltsin politically and could backfire economically.

Reformers called it a financially senseless attempt to discredit the president. Hard-liners said the painful step revealed the government's incompetence and lack of concern for people.

Mr. Yeltsin had rushed back from vacation to ease the terms of the ruble exchange and halt a series of legislative moves by his opponents to derail his free-market reforms.

Despite Mr. Yeltsin's efforts to soften the blow on ordinary Russians, the president must counter the perception he either initially endorsed the measure or failed to block it in time.

"The main blame for this unpopular action will be put on the president," noted Yevgeny Kiselev, a popular pro-Yeltsin television commentator.

Mr. Yeltsin's chief political foe, parliament speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov, seized the initiative over the weekend while the president kept silent.

Mr. Khasbulatov appeared on national television and called the move "a direct violation of human rights," saying the lawmakers would fire those responsible unless the measure was revoked.

Other opponents, including Vice President Alexander Rutskoi, the hard-line National Salvation Front and the Conservative Civic Union, were quick to condemn the Central Bank's action.

The hardliners' arguments fell on fertile soil. Millions of Russians were hit hard in the most sensitive spot — their pockets. They felt they were being robbed by their own government.

By setting a ceiling of 35,000 rubles on cash exchanges and ordering the rest to be deposited into six-month bank accounts, the Central Bank threatened to turn their savings into worthless paper.

The cabinet backed the step, carried out in the tradition of communist-era monetary re-

forms.

Many Russians recalled the 1961 reform of Soviet Leader Nikita Khrushchev, when prices jumped alongside 10-1 exchange of old rubles, or the 1991 reform of Soviet Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov, which almost instantly nullified all 50- and 100-ruble notes.

The level of government endorsement for the reform, and Mr. Yeltsin's personal support for the measure remain a mystery. It was announced early Saturday as Mr. Yeltsin was vacationing, and Finance Minister Boris Fyodorov, a leading reformer, was in the United States.

"All top leaders of the country, except for Boris Fyodorov... knew about this measure," said the deputy head of the Central Bank, Alexander Khandruyev.

Some media reports said Mr. Yeltsin did not know about the entire plan or was unaware of its key details.

Mr. Fyodorov interrupted his trip and hurried back to Moscow. In a statement, he called the move a "political provocation aimed at inciting public discontent against the president, his cabinet and the course" of reform.

Gleb Yakunin, a leader of the Democratic Russia Movement, said the move was part of the legislative offensive against Mr. Yeltsin's market reforms, and urged him to dismiss Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and Central Bank Chairman Viktor Gerashchenko.

The Central Bank said it took the measure to combat inflation, now running at about 800 percent a year, and liquidate about 1.7 trillion of mostly old rubles held by the former Soviet republics.

Economists, including Mr. Fyodorov, said there was no financial basis for the measure, warning it would cause a flood of old rubles from other former Soviet republics, fuel inflation, undermine small businesses and put western aid in question.

The reform already has jeopardized plans reached earlier this month for an economic union of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus.

AMMAN (R) — Khartoum will resume talks with the IMF in Washington soon to try to solve a dispute over \$1.5 billion of unpaid debts to the fund, Sudan's Industry Minister Tuj Al Sir Mustafa said Wednesday.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) which has had strong ties with Khartoum, announced this month it began procedures to rule Sudan ineligible to draw funds because of non-payment of debts.

Finance Minister (Abdul Rabin Hamdi), at the invitation of the IMF, is leaving to Washington in the next few days to continue discussions on

Sudan's case in an effort to solve the debts issue," Mr. Mustafa, on a visit to Jordan, told Reuters.

Sudan urged the IMF last week to reconsider steps to suspend its membership and open a dialogue over its arrears, the largest in Africa.

Mr. Mustafa said Khartoum would also raise an earlier request for a \$1 billion stabilisation fund to rehabilitate the country's war-torn economy to enable it to resume debt repayment.

He cited two main "technical" issues blocking an agreement with the IMF — \$1.5 billion in arrears and demands that Sudan apply interest rates in its banks.

"We are a member state, but we have not received a single cent from the fund since 1984," he said, adding that all of Sudan's debts were incurred under the rule of former president Jaafar Al Numeiri, who was ousted in the late 1980s.

"They (IMF) are insisting that we use interest rates in our Islamic banking system which is based on profit sharing and this is a dispute of principle with the IMF," Mr. Mustafa said.

Islam forbids usury. Instead, banks following Islamic rules, give a percentage of profits instead of interest.

Mr. Mustafa stressed that

Sudan's problems with the IMF, in reality, were of a "political nature," but did not elaborate.

He said Khartoum's recently adopted "free market measures" were in line with IMF policies, including steps such as freezing price controls, a lifting of subsidies and exchange controls.

"The IMF teams say there are no technical problems. It is the political issue which is the only obstacle because there is no reason why the IMF should have a problem with us," he said.

Mr. Mustafa referred to an IMF memorandum circulated to donors in August on Sudan's success in achieving a 11.3 per

cent GNP growth and urging them to deal with Khartoum despite the unpaid debt.

"The IMF told us that our economic performance was not faulty... they (fund) began feeling we are a serious country bent on real reform, but suddenly, in October, they changed and told us we first had to solve our political problems with our donors," he said. "But those very donors and financial institutions whom we approach, look at our performance, tell us what we want to finance us but then tell us 'first go solve your problems with the IMF.'

He said an IMF team, which visited Khartoum last week, "was impressed" by Sudan's ability to narrow the budget deficit to less than five per cent of GDP in this year's budget ended June 30.

"We increased revenues by 103

per cent and reduced expenditure and the actual deficit to 34 billion Sudanese pounds," he said. He did not elaborate on the latest budget figures.

Mr. Mustafa said there were several Western donors keen on funding but could not go further because there was "no green

light" from the IMF.

"The World Bank helped us in rehabilitating our public sector sugar industry and were pleased

with our performance which doubled to 210,000 tonnes by the end of June," he said. "But their continued support is dependent on approval of the IMF."

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per cent and reduced expenditure and the actual deficit to 34 billion Sudanese pounds," he said. He did not elaborate on the latest budget figures.

Kuwait denies investment in Portugal illegal

LISBON (R) — A senior Kuwaiti official denied Tuesday press

allegations that \$60 million of Kuwaiti state funds were illegally used for a hotel project in Portugal.

"I'm sure there have been no illegalities," the official, who asked not to be identified, told Reuters during a visit to Portugal.

Newspapers in London and Kuwait have said the partially state-owned Kuwait International Investment Company (KIC) made large losses on its alleged investment of public funds in a hotel on Portugal's southern Algarve coast.

A former executive of KIC in Portugal said KIC invested \$28 million in the Sheraton Algarve Hotel near the resort town of

Albufeira and lent a further \$60 million to its owners.

The man, who asked not to be named, told Reuters that KIC made the five-year loan to the hotel's mainly Kuwaiti owners, whom he said were closely linked to KIC's own directors.

The 215-bed luxury hotel which opened in August last year is owned by United Investments Portugal f.t.s. (UIP), which is regarded in the Portuguese tourist trade as Kuwaiti-owned.

The former KIC executive said KIC had a three per cent stake in UIP through a property fund which KIC managed.

"There could be a conflict of interest here," he said.

A UIP official contacted by Reuters said he was unable to say who owned UIP.

SOON **SOON**

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Daily except Fridays

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LONDON EXCHANGE RATES
LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

U.S. \$1.00 costs	Canadian dollar
1.2830/40	Deutschmarks
1.7200/10	Dutch guilders
1.9330/40	Swiss francs
1.5139/49	Belgian francs
35.61/62	French francs
5.8625/75	Italian lire
1604.26/2	Japanese yen
105.55/65	Swedish kronas
8.0780/80	Norwegian kronas
7.3700/00	Danish kronas
6.6980/80	Denmark kronas
One sterling	£ 1.4900/10
One ounce of gold	\$391.45/391.95

Bosnians negotiate ethnic division

GENEVA (R) — Bosnia's Muslim President Alija Izetbegovic sat down with his Serb and Croat enemies Wednesday to begin the tortuous process of negotiating his country's future ethnic division.

On the second day of peace talks that mediators hope to continue until a final settlement is reached, the beleaguered president met the leaders of Serb and Croat factions and their political masters from Serbia and Croatia proper.

Sources close to the Geneva talks said the discussions were to focus on maps showing the outlines of three ethnic mini-states, as jointly proposed by Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and Croat leader Mate Boban.

Although Mr. Izetbegovic still rejects any such "confederal solution" for Bosnia, the sources said hard bargaining had nevertheless begun on who gets what after 16 months of brutal conflict.

One course close to the negotiations said Serb leader Karadzic presented a map Tuesday under which the Muslims, who represented over 40 per cent of Bosnia's pre-war population, would receive about 27 per cent of its territory.

The Karadzic plan would effectively confine the Muslims to a rump Bosnian republic around the capital Sarajevo and to a pocket of territory in the northwest. Three Muslim enclaves in eastern Bosnia would come under Serb control.

Both Mr. Izetbegovic and international mediators Lord Owen

and Thorvald Stoltenberg were said to have objected to the plan, saying it sold the Muslims short.

The mediators were said to be insisting that Muslims receive at least 30 per cent of Bosnian territory, against the estimated 15 per cent they currently control.

Speaking to reporters before the talks, Serb leader Karadzic issued a blunt warning that there were two ways to end the war and the Muslims could only choose one of them.

"One way would be through talks, the other would be total defeat of one side — and it would be the Muslim side," he said.

"They are well-armed but they cannot fight against the Christian majority of Croats and Serbs. They should accept an agreement immediately because what they get around the table they cannot get through fighting," he added.

Diplomats said the more difficult bargaining might come between Muslims and Croats, former allies who have been recently locked in a fierce grab for territory in central Bosnia.

Although the Serbs appeared willing to give up some of the 70 per cent of Bosnia they have taken since they launched their rebellion against the Sarajevo administration in April 1992, Bosnian Croats were said to be refusing to cede more valuable land in the centre of the country.

The Croats were also under pressure to allow the Muslims enough territory to the southwest of Sarajevo to give them a realistic chance of setting up viable transport links to a free-port on

the Adriatic Sea.

The official timetable of the Geneva conference began with a meeting between Mr. Izetbegovic, Boban and Croatian President Franjo Tudjman. Mr. Izetbegovic was accompanied by other members of the collective Bosnian presidency.

Two hours later Mr. Izetbegovic held talks with Serb leader Mr. Karadzic and Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, generally seen as Mr. Karadzic's main backer.

Halfway into the second day of talks, diplomats and conference officials reported a general mood of optimism although Lord Owen told reporters he would be surprised if any deal were struck before the weekend.

Meanwhile the U.N. Wednesday played down a shelling attack in Sarajevo that exposed French U.N. troops to fire for the second time in two days.

U.N. officials also acknowledged that troops in Bosnia had so far been unable to implement fully the U.N.'s "safe areas" scheme for the republic's beleaguered Muslims in any one of the six bavens, including the capital.

A detachment of 40 French soldiers who were setting up a base at Sarajevo's television centre Tuesday fled into the basement when shells began crashing down close to the complex.

But U.N. military spokesman Barry Frewer said the barrage, which followed a direct Serb attack on another French U.N. military base in the Bosnian

capital Sunday, had not been aimed at the troops.

He said it may have been a spillover from heavy fighting on nearby Zuc Hill, one of only two heights overlooking the besieged capital that is still in Muslim-led government hands.

"They did not consider it an attack on their position and therefore they did not return fire," Maj. Frewer told a news briefing.

Maj. Frewer said the shells at the TV building were believed to have come from Serb positions but he could not be certain.

France called on the United Nations and NATO Tuesday to activate plans to provide air cover for the 9,000 U.N. ground forces in Bosnia, who have come under repeated attack, usually from small arms, since they arrived in Bosnia late last year.

In Washington, President Bill Clinton reaffirmed Wednesday that the United States would consider using air power to defend United Nations troops in Bosnia if asked to do so.

The position of the United States has long been that if the United Nations troops were attacked there we will do our part to protect them by making available air power," Mr. Clinton said in a picture-taking session with congressional Democrats.

"We have not yet been asked to do that," Mr. Clinton added. "If we are asked, that is something we will seriously consider."

"I'm going to be reviewing it in the next couple of days," Mr. Clinton added.

Rebel bombs cause blackout in Lima

LIMA (AFP) — Shining Path guerrillas bombed vital power lines late Tuesday, plunging most of the city in darkness, as other bombs went off outside five banks causing some damage but no victims, police said.

The attacks came hours after a van loaded with explosives blew up outside the U.S. embassy, causing heavy damage and injuring two police officers. A suspected guerrilla was shot and killed while trying to escape, police said.

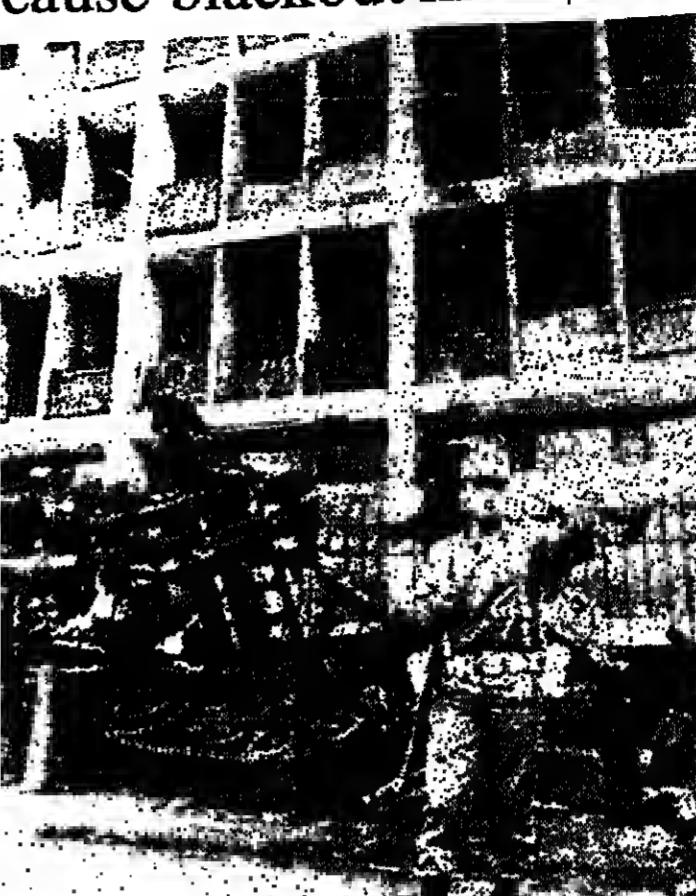
The wave of guerrilla bombings and attacks since Monday are apparently aimed at disrupting Wednesday's independence day celebrations and at proving President Alberto Fujimori's boast that the Shining Path is moribund.

Mr. Fujimori, who after a military-backed power grab last year vowed to rid the country of guerrilla violence, marks his third year in office Wednesday.

State-run power company Electro Lima said electricity would be gradually restored to all areas, but bad no assessment of the damage caused to its installations.

The five bombs that went off at the time of the blackout damaged the banks and nearby buildings, but caused no victims, police said.

Thousands of people were out celebrating the country's 172nd independence anniversary late Tuesday when the power outage and the explosions sent most of them back to the safety of their homes.



A Peruvian army soldier keeps reporters away from the site of an explosion at the U.S. embassy in Lima (AFP photo)

The U.S. embassy bomb caused heavy damage to the right side of the four-storey building, breaking windows and setting a number of small fires. An armoured car parked in front of the embassy was left a twisted mess of metal.

Peking censors ban Cannes winner

PEKING (AFP) — Hundreds of screaming fans mobbed director Chen Kaige at the Chinese premiere of *Farewell To My Concubine* for what the Cannes Golden Camera-winner said would be the film's only screening here. Censors last week abruptly retracted permission for the film, joint winner of the Cannes Film Festival's top prize, to run in the Chinese capital. They reluctantly bowed to pressure from the Peking Exhibition Centre cinema for the film's premiere to go ahead before a select audience of journalists and wealthy Chinese.

"The premiere will also be the last showing," Mr. Chen told journalists at the screening. He declined to elaborate, saying: "I don't want to be involved in politics." Hong Kong actor and singer Leslie Cheung, who stars in the film, said he and the crew were "very disappointed" at the decision. "I feel very sad," he said. "It's ridiculous. We are film workers." The film had already been cut and a new ending added in order to satisfy the censors, sources said. The film chronicles the relations between two Peking opera stars, tracing their career from their youth in the 1920s through to the Communist victory in 1949, the Cultural Revolution in the 1960s and up to the present day. It centres on a love triangle between the opera stars and a prostitute and alibis to the homosexuality of one of the singers, though there are no graphic scenes.

Move to legalise prostitution falls in S. Africa

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — A move for the legalisation of prostitution in South Africa was defeated in the Johannesburg municipal council here late Tuesday, press reports said Wednesday. A woman councillor, Anschen Dreyer, had argued that the city

should petition parliament to legalise prostitution and bring prostitutes into the tax system, to generate revenue that could pay for clinics to help prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. But councillor Jack Bloom summed up the objections when he said: "I shudder to think of the state becoming the big pimp by regulating and taking its fair cut of earnings from this trade."

Mr. Watanabe, boss of a large party faction, is a close ally of scandal-tainted former Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone. He was Mr. Miyazawa's foreign minister and deputy prime minister and in line to succeed him until forced to retire in April because of failing health.

Mr. Kono, who as chief cabinet secretary was Mr. Miyazawa's right-hand man in government, entered the ballot Wednesday after the reformist camp failed to persuade ailing 78-year-old Justice Minister Masaharu Gotoda to run.

Richard The Lionheart casket goes on display

ROUEN, France (AFP) — The treasures of the Cathedral of Rouen, including the casket in which the heart of Richard the Lionheart was placed, have gone on display for the first time in the city's museum until Dec. 31. The treasures are not normally on public show but at the St. Romain Tower, where they have been kept, is being renovated and the old canonical buildings have been turned into a permanent museum.

Meanwhile an Afghan presidential spokesman said Wednesday Tajikistan should start talks with Tajik Islamic rebels as a step toward ending the border crisis between that country and Afghanistan.

"It is advisable for the Tajik government to start negotiations with the opposition parties now, and not wait many years like Afghanistan's deposed Communist President Najibullah did," spokesman Abdul Aziz Morad said.

17-million-year old elephant skull found in France

TOULOUSE, France (AFP) — The 17-million-year old skull of a prehistoric ancestor of the elephant was discovered on a paleontological site near Comps, in southwest France. Francis Duranton, in charge of digs and conservation at the natural history museum of Toulouse, said the skull was the oldest ever found in Europe of a *Deinotherium*, a member of the elephant family.

In the same area, the remains of a deer of an unknown species" had also been found, believed to date from the same era, he said. Both sets of remains would increase knowledge of these animals, which have long disappeared from earth.

The skull of a *Deinotherium*, a mammal belonging to a family which has completely died out, halfway between a giraffe and a deer, was found on the same site in July last year.

Gaelic newspaper launched in Nova Scotia

MABOU, Canada (AFP) — A Gaelic newspaper has been launched in Nova Scotia as part of a bid to preserve the nearly forgotten Celtic tongue. "Am Breig" is to be published quarterly by Frances and Ron MacEachen of Mabou, a village on the Cape Breton Island. "It seems fitting that a paper with connotations for good times, hospitality and music be the title for a new Celtic publication," the couple said in the newspaper's first edition.

Congress committee cuts SDI programme

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — A congressional panel cut \$800 million from President Bill Clinton's request for \$3.8 billion for the ballistic missile defence programme once known as the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI).

The House of Representatives Armed Services Committee rejected a still deeper cut advocated by Chairman Ron Dellums, a Democrat from California, to approve the cut by a margin of 29 to 27.

The programme, dubbed Star Wars during former President Ronald Reagan's administration, is stated to be shifted to a ground-based weapons to intercept incoming ballistic missiles.

Also Tuesday, the Armed Services Committee rejected a bid to throw out the ban on homosexuals serving in the military, and approved a policy stating that homosexuality undermines readiness.

The panel planned to work through the night to finish work on the \$263 billion defence budget.

The Armed Services Committee approved \$111 million Tuesday to pay for U.S. military participation in international peacekeeping operations.

The money was included by a 32-22 vote in the annual U.S. defence authorisation bill for next year.

The bill would establish a new precedent for congressional funding of U.S. military costs of participating in international operations, in addition to paying to the United Nations the U.S. share for such operations.

Several Republicans on the committee objected that the separate funds for the U.S. military might enable a president to commit U.S. troops to some international operation on his own.

President Clinton requested the military money in addition to more than \$600 million for the U.S. contribution to U.N. peacekeeping operations next year.

Congressional committees have cut the \$600 million to about \$420 million but Congress has not taken final action yet.

The New York Times said Wednesday the United States is preparing an arms control plan that would ban the production of materials used to make nuclear weapons.

The administration of President Clinton is making plans to propose a worldwide ban on the production of highly enriched uranium and plutonium unless it is used for nuclear power and subject to international inspection, the newspaper said.

Under the proposal, which has not yet been finalised, all nations would be asked to sign international agreements to stop producing uranium and plutonium for weapons. The United States already has such a policy but Britain, China and Russia do not.

The newspaper said administration experts believe the plan, combined with a ban on nuclear testing, would restrain weapons development.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Worst seems over in South Asia floods

KATHMANDU (R) — The worst appears to be over in floods which have savaged Nepal, Bangladesh and north India killing more than 4,000 people, officials said Wednesday. Officials in all three countries reported water levels dropping in dozens of rivers which, after ferocious monsoon rains, stormed over their banks, swept away villages, made millions homeless and caused heavy crop damage. "The worst seems to be over now," said Nepali weatherman Purna Shrestha who reported the heaviest rainfall in the region for nearly two decades. "It didn't rain, it literally poured," he said. Officials in India and Bangladesh said river levels were dropping in clearer weather, allowing relief operations to be stepped up for millions of people who are short of food and threatened by cholera epidemic.

Kazakhs, Uzbeks call for CIS meeting

MOSCOW (R) — The leaders of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, complaining that unilateral decision-making was hindering economic reforms in the Commonwealth of Independent States, called Wednesday for an urgent CIS summit. "On all sides, agreements achieved with great difficulty are being broken by unilateral decisions," the two presidents said in a statement published by ITAR-TASS News Agency and apparently prompted by Russia's drastic monetary reform this week.

Rivers collide as Kansas City braces

KANSAS CITY, Missouri (R) — Flood surges from the Missouri and Kansas Rivers collided at their confluence in Kansas City Tuesday, forcing massive evacuations and straining already weakened levees. Nervous officials braced for the worst as the charging waters pounded the embankment at the mouth of the Kansas River. "It's close, too close, but it looks like the dike is holding right now," said Kansas City Fire Chief Charles Fischer. Weekend rains across Nebraska, Kansas and eastern Iowa have fed the swollen rivers, with record crests forecast to converge on a triangular battery of levees and dikes that wall in the confluence and protect hundreds of homes and shops.

Ukraine, U.S. sign defence pact

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States and Ukraine Tuesday signed the first U.S. defence cooperation pact with a former Soviet republic, but it fell short of the security guarantees sought by Ukraine's parliament as a precondition to giving up its 1,600 nuclear warheads. The modest agreement for exchanges of military officials and the provision of U.S. defence expertise was signed by Ukrainian Defence Minister Konstantin Morozov and U.S. Defence Secretary Les Aspin at the Pentagon. They called it a base for expanding future military and other ties and for improving Ukraine's security from its neighbours. One of those neighbours in Russia, which has demanded that Kiev turn over the former Soviet nuclear arms to Russia for destruction.

Protestants fail to kill IRA ally

BEFAST (R) — Protestant extremists narrowly failed in an attempt to kill a woman councillor from Sinn Fein, the political wing of the Irish Republican Army (IRA). The Ulster Freedom Fighters, an outlawed Protestant group fighting to keep Northern Ireland British, admitted responsibility for the attack on Anne Armstrong's West Belfast home and said it was "sheer luck" that it failed. A gunman fired through the window of the family house, hitting the television set and narrowly missing the Armstrong family of five. It was the second attack within 24 hours by the Ulster Freedom Fighters who also placed a carbomb outside the home of a moderate nationalist councillor with the Social Democratic and Labour Party. No one was hurt.

4th suspect identified in Rio massacre

RIO DE JANEIRO (AFP) — A fourth policeman has been identified as a suspect in the massacre of seven street children who were shot to death in the city centre here, police said. Police said he was Lieutenant Anderson Marcelo Pinheiro de Albuquerque, like the three suspects in the case, a member of Rio de Janeiro's 40,000 strong militarised police force. Nilto Batista, the state secretary in charge of the Civil Police investigating the massacre, said late Monday the case had been solved and all remaining suspects would be detained in the coming hours. The children were killed early Friday outside the Candelaria Church, a Rio de Janeiro landmark in the city centre where about 50 minors were sleeping in the streets.

Firebomb destroys NAACP office

SACRAMENTO, California (AFP) — The office of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP) was destroyed by a firebomb tossed through a window, the second such attack in a week, officials said. No one was injured in the predawn attack Tuesday and no arrests have been made, officials said. It took four hours to put out the fire which destroyed records, office equipment and furniture. A pipe bomb exploded at the NAACP office in Tacoma, Washington Friday. "We see these acts as part of an emerging trend of attempts by the right-wing elements in our society to thwart the very positive re-awakening of activism within the civil rights movement," said Benjamin Chavis, NAACP's executive director.

Nigerian parties agree on government plan

LAGOS (R) — Nigeria's two parties have agreed on a plan for an interim government and hope the military will accept it to end the crisis arising from scrapped elections, a party spokesman said Wednesday.

"It will be the first change of government in 38 years so we are proceeding very cautiously," Mr. Akamatsu said after talks among senior officials of the seven parties.

Social Democratic Party (SDP) spokesman Amos Idakula told Reuters the plan had been agreed in talks with the National Republican Convention (NRC).

"The shaping of the interim option will come after the military government accepts it," Mr. Idakula said.

General Babangida considered the idea of an interim government two weeks ago but later dropped it, saying his civilian successor could be chosen only through a fresh ballot.

"There is no going to be an election. Even the NRC are not ready for election," Mr. Idakula said from the capital Abuja, where leaders of the two parties have been meeting since Tuesday.

Moshood Abiola, the SDP's candidate in the June polls, was well ahead in tallies before the military annulled the results. He has claimed since that he is the president-elect.

<p

Sports

China's future sportsmen train for 2000 Olympics



Han Guilan instructs a pupil at the Peking Amateur Sports School as his classmates look on (AP photo)

international sporting success.

"It's not like some European countries where athletes tend to take it rather too easy," he says.

China's sports schools, like those of the former Soviet Union, have been criticised abroad for wrecking young children emotionally through confinement, excessive pressure to succeed and rejection in their early teens for the 80 per cent that do not make the city, national then Olympic teams.

Song says he does not mind working so hard "because I want to be the Chinese champion, the best in all of China."

"I can do it, I'm very good," confides the assured gymnast, before cracking into giggles.

Lu Zongxian, a shy seven-year-old, is less ready than Song to

boast her own ability, but her steady gaze suggests an equal determination.

"I want to be number one," she says, standing to attention as she talks. "But I want all my friends to be number one too."

The remark sums up the atmosphere in the school's gymnasium, where children so small they could virtually walk under the chair instead vault over it.

Competition is intense and coaches are strict, but between exercises the students laugh and play together like any seven-year-olds. "They're all my good friends too," says Song.

The children are all rooting for the success of Peking's bid to host the Olympics in 2000 and being pushed extra hard to prepare for the games.

"The pupils here now are the ones who would take part in the 2000 Olympics, so we are putting extra effort into training them," says Mr. Wang. "And it's a real boost for them — it encourages them to work even harder."

The prospect of becoming one of the chosen few to make the Olympic team is understandably appealing to athletes and their families.

With it comes good housing and, in the case of the Barcelona Games, cash rewards reported at up to one million yuan (\$174,000) for bringing in a gold medal.

Song dreams of reaching the heights of Li Ning, China's star male gymnast whose three golds at Barcelona brought him lucrative advertising contracts and his own sports brand.

Jackson sets European high hurdles record at Sestriere

SESTRIERE, Italy (R) — Briton Colin Jackson demolished his own European 110 metres hurdles record when he posted a time of 12.97 seconds in an international athletics meeting at this high-altitude ski resort Wednesday.

The 26-year-old Welshman destroyed a high-class field including Canadian Olympic champion Mark McKey to better the previous record of 13.04 seconds he set in Cologne last August. "I'm obviously very pleased with the performance and more than satisfied with the time," said Jackson.

His time, just 0.05 seconds outside the four-year-old world record of American Roger Kingdom, came despite running into a wind of 1.6 metres per second in hot, sunny conditions.

Young faced little opposition

but bad to settle for the unexceptional 13.02 seconds.

Namibian Frankie Fredericks, silver medallist in the two Olympic sprint events last year, notched up a double success to underline his World Championship credentials.

American 400 metres Olympic champion Quincy Watts enjoyed his outing 2,000 metres above sea level in this small, uncovered stadium.

Watts clocked 44.13 seconds,

the third best time of the year. His two chief rivals, fellow Americans Michael Johnson and Butch Reynolds, are the only men to have gone faster in 1993.

Kevin Young 400 metres hurdles Olympic champion, duly returned to form after seeing his 26-race unbeaten streak ended in London last week.

Young faced little opposition

JORDAN TIMES, THURSDAY-FRIDAY, JULY 29-30, 1993

Olympic champion Drechsler could manage only 7.12 metres in reply.

Tiedtke's leap was the best of the year but the wind speed of 3.70 metres per second was well above the permitted limit.

Drechsler recorded the longest jump by a woman in history with 7.63 metres here last year.

But she has denied a place in the record books by a wind reading of just one centimetre above the maximum limit of two metres a second.

Organisers have made a Ferrari 348 sports car the prize for anyone who breaks a world record in Sestriere.

The red soft-top, parked in the middle of the athletics field, was long on admirers but short on takers.

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Sotomayor breaks world high jump record

SALAMANCA, Spain (R) — Javier Sotomayor, who extended his own world high jump record to 2.45 metres on Tuesday, is confident that none of his current rivals will break the new mark.

"The new record could last a few years yet," the 25-year-old Cuban Olympic champion said.

"Unless there is some unknown youngster making great advances somewhere, I don't think there's anyone who can break my record at the moment," Sotomayor added a centimetre

to his old record with his second attempt at 2.45 metres in this ancient university town.

He beat Patrik Sjoeberg's world record here in 1988 with a leap of 2.43 and, on July 29, 1989, Sotomayor became the first athlete to clear eight feet when he lifted his record to 2.44 in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

"Since the beginning of the year I've been feeling good," Sotomayor said. "I won the World Indoor Championships in Toronto with 2.41 and have been

averaging 2.35 on the European circuit.

"Given the good memories I have of this city it was clear the record could fall here."

"I wanted to break the record here because it's a small city and I feel like I'm in Cuba. People recognise me in the street and ask how I am, putting me in the right mental frame."

He dedicated the record to "my son, my people, my government, which has been such a

great help to me, and to the people of Salamanca."

Sotomayor said his new goal is to win the world title in the Stuttgart World Championships next month.

"I've now got a new world record, if I can there it will be a brilliant year," he said. "Maybe it's possible ... run a couple of centimetres higher — 2.46 or 2.48 perhaps, but I don't believe it's possible to jump 2.50. At least nothing that I'm planning on."

NBA star dies after collapsing at practice

BOSTON (R) — Boston Celtics star guard Reggie Lewis died early Tuesday evening after collapsing while shooting baskets in the late afternoon.

The 27-year-old Lewis, who collapsed on court during a game three months ago and never played another National Basketball Association (NBA) game, was taken to a local hospital where he was pronounced dead shortly after 7:30 p.m. (2330 GMT).

No official announcement has been made by Waltham-Weston Hospital as to the cause of Lewis' death.

Lewis' death is the second to rock the NBA in less than two months. New Jersey Nets star guard Drazen Petrovic was killed in a car accident on June 7.

The tragedy is also the second to strike the Celtics in recent years.

Len Bias, Lewis' predecessor as the team's top draft pick, died after taking cocaine in 1986 celebrating his selection by the team.

Lewis collapsed around 5:00 p.m. (2100 GMT) at the Celtics'

practice court at Brandeis University and was unconscious from the time of his arrival at the hospital at 5:41 p.m.

Witnesses said they saw Lewis on his back, "slipping for life" at the practice site. Emergency medical technicians could not resuscitate him.

Lewis, the Celtics' leading scorer the past two years, also passed out during a Boston playoff game against the Charlotte Hornets on April 29 and did not play in the remainder of the series, in which Boston was eliminated.

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AHLAN NABIL AND HISHAM THEATRE

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GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANIAH HIRSCH
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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 Pass 3 Pass

What do you bid now?

Q.1—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
*AJ8877 C4 QK99 *AKQJ What is your opening bid?

Q.2—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
*Q104 *KA8833 983 *AKQJ Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with one spade. What action do you take?

Q.3—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
*44 28832 985 *AKQ1094 Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with one diamond. What action do you take?

Q.4—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
*A6 2AJ1083 QAQJ *KJ3

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PHILADELPHIA

Al Pacino — in
SCENT OF A WOMAN

Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 6:15, 9 p.m.

TO DAY

CONCORD

THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

Blasts rock Milan, Rome; officials see 'political' terror

ROME (AP) — People cried out in panic as bombs ripped through Rome's ancient centre, just minutes after an explosion killed five people in Milan. Dozens were injured in the attacks.

There was no immediate indication who may have carried out Tuesday night's attacks. Officials said they were an attempt to sow panic at a time when Italians, disgusted by a corruption scandal that has dragged in much of the country's political and business elite, are hoping for radical political change. Two bombings struck terror in May, including one that damaged the Uffizi art museum in Florence.

Some officials suggested the bombings may be an attempt to derail the corruption probe, but prosecutors said they had no intention of slowing up.

The two explosions in Rome, just before midnight, heavily damaged two churches, one from the 6th century and the other the Pope's seat as bishop of Rome. Twenty-four people were hospitalized.

Premier Carlo Ciampi blamed "political terrorists," although he acknowledged his government did not know who was behind the attacks.

Pope John Paul II said he was praying for Italians "at this time of great trial." Immediately after his general audience at the Vatican, he viewed the damage at his basilica and the second church damaged by the blasts.

The head of Italy's civilian intelligence service resigned within hours of the bomb attacks.

Announcing the resignation of Angelo Finocchiaro, Interior Minister Nicola Mancino told parliament he had immediately named Domenico Salazar as Mr. Finocchiaro's successor at the head of the SISDE intelligence agency.

Israeli strikes displace 500,000 in Lebanon

(Continued from page 1)

Israel is deliberately forcing the massive Lebanese exodus northwards out of the combat area in a bid to pressure Lebanon and Syria, which was 35,000 troops in Lebanon, into halting Hezbollah attacks.

Mr. Rabin accused Syria of at best "closing its eyes" and even covering Hezbollah.

About 5,000 Hezbollah partisans staged a demonstration in support of the guerrillas in defiance of a government ban, shouting: "Death to America, death to Israel."

Branding flags of the Islamic Resistance, Hezbollah's armed wing, and portraits of Iranian religious leaders, the demonstrators, led by five of the eight Hezbollah members of parliament, marched for more than one hour.

Around 50 police watched the demonstration but did not intervene as Hezbollah security forces, with pistols hung on their belts, led the march.

The government Tuesday issued an order banning all marches here ahead of the Hezbollah demonstration, but officials said authorities later gave them tacit approval for the protest.

Young men and women tore up and burned pictures of Mr. Rabin, U.S. President Bill Clinton and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, as well as American and Israeli flags.

U.N. officials said hundreds of houses in towns and villages were destroyed by artillery fire along a 50-kilometre arc stretching from the Mediterranean coast to the foothills of Mount Hermon. Some had crumbled on the inhabitants.

The survivors first fled east into the Bekka Valley and west to the port cities of Tyre and Sidon.

But they had to move again Wednesday as Israeli jets, helicopter gunships and missile boats pounded those towns and the cluster of Palestinian refugee camps surrounding them.

Officials of the government and the U.N. peacekeeping troops estimated the fighting had forced 500,000 people to flee southern Lebanon, out of a population of 800,000.

For Israeli missile boats opened first Wednesday morning on Sidon, Lebanon's third largest city, where the population of 300,000 had been swollen by refugees from the border area.

Panicked families crowded into cars, trucks and buses and turned Lebanon's coastal highway into a four-lane traffic jam headed towards Beirut.

The Israeli boats fired missiles Wednesday evening which struck Sidon's gas plant, which provides all of southern Lebanon's bottled gas. Firefighters contained the huge blaze that broke out, scattering people from nearby neighbourhoods.

"I can't take it any more," said Mansour Mandour as he prepared to leave Sidon. The 80-year-old man had already fled the village of Jibsheet to the east and said his town of 5,000 was now nearly abandoned.

In Milan, more than 15,000 people marched in protest of the attacks, gathering in Piazza Fontana, the site of a 1969 bombing that killed 17 people. It has never been solved.

The Milan explosion went off about 11:15 p.m. (0900 GMT) on the Piazza Cavour, about a kilometre (half-mile) from La Scala opera house in front of a modern art gallery. An adjacent art pavilion was destroyed along with 20 art works by Mario Nigro.

Three firefighters, a policeman and a man sleeping in a nearby park were killed. At least seven other people were hurt, none seriously. Windows at the gallery were broken but no damage to art works was reported.

The ANSA news agency reported early Wednesday that a caller claimed responsibility for the Milan blast on behalf of the November 17 Armed Falange Party. But authorities have given little credence to claims by callers using that name in previous bombings.

News reports said authorities found a Fiat Compact near the main train station believed to have been the get-away car for the St. John Lateran bombing. Three witnesses gave police a description of the car and a suspect as well as its license plate number, the news agency AGI said.

Mr. Ciampi indicated earlier that the government would not impose strict measures in response to the bombings. "In the face of repeated attempts to create disorder and panic to halt the country in its move to renewal, the government reaffirms its determination to guarantee the right of Italians to democratic progress and liberty," he said.

Other officials blamed the blasts on mafia attempts to scare

Italians away from political reform. "It's a political-mafia warning. I don't see how to read it otherwise," said Milan Mayor Marco Formentini.

In Rome, the first explosion occurred around midnight, damaging the facade of St. John Lateran Basilica. Pope John Paul II's church as titular bishop of Rome. Twenty-four people were hospitalised.

The nearby residence of the vicar of Rome, who carries out the duties of bishop in the Pope's place, was damaged inside.

Minutes later an explosion went off on Via del Velabro, near the ancient Roman forum and the Michelangelo-designed Campidoglio, the seat of city government.

It destroyed the famed portico of the 6th century Church of San Giorgio in Velabro. All that was left was a single arch and length of stone beam.

Ancient columns lay amid the rubble of the portico and a huge hole was torn in the side of the church.

"Almost everyone threw themselves on the floor. The lights went out. There were people screaming, there were people calling for their cats and there were people calling for the Madonna," said Giancarlo Ercomi, who was in his nearby apartment when the blast hit.

The powerful blasts shook windows at least six kilometres away. Sirens wailed across the city and shaken tourists mixed with police and local onlookers.

Milan is the centre of Italy's anti-corruption probe, which has implicated more than 2,500 business and political figures over the past 1 1/2 years.

The city's chief prosecutor, Francesco Saverio Borelli, called the Milan blast a "symbolic act to intimidate the investigators.

The Regent reviewed with Mr. Ganey the role of the U.N. in light of world developments and discussed the obstacles posed by Israel in the peace process. He focused particularly on the ongoing Israeli assault on South Lebanon. Such practices, he said, "would never help achieve climate conducive to the peace process."

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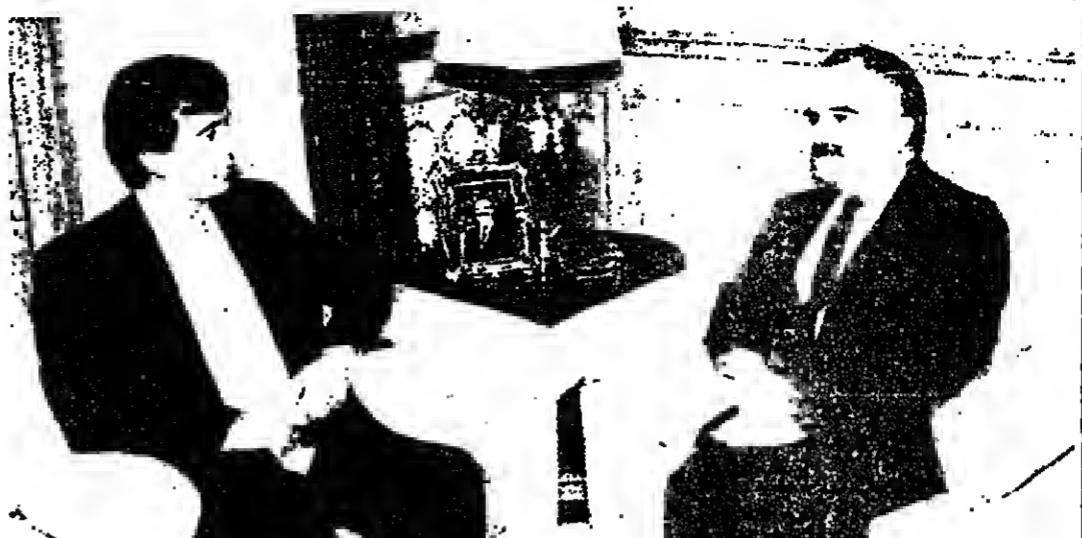
Regent: Israel wants advantages of peace and Mideast acceptance without paying for it

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, said Wednesday Israel was seeking to acquire the advantages of peace without paying for it and trying to become an acceptable member of the club of the Middle East while continuing to expand at the expense of the neighbouring Arab countries.

"The occupied Arab territories continue to witness geographic and social disintegration since 1948 due to the Israeli occupation," the Regent said at a meeting at the Royal Court with U.N. General Assembly President Stoyan Ganey.

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His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Wednesday meets with U.N. General Assembly President Stoyan Ganey (Petra photo)

gress for the world unless it becomes humanitarian in nature and acts independently from the polarisation process and away from all forms of hegemony."

Referring to Jordan's losses in the Gulf crisis, the Regent said the United Nations should

address the situation and compensate for the damage and losses Jordan sustained.

Mr. Ganey outlined to the Regent the efforts of the U.N. to re-organise itself so as to be able to better shoulder its responsibilities and contribute to world development.

He also praised Jordan's positive role and its continued support of and cooperation with the United Nations.

Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs Jawad Al Anani and Jordan's U.N. Representative Adnan Abu Odeh were present at the meeting.

Iraq says no final deal yet on arms monitoring

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — Iraq said Wednesday it has not yet reached final agreement with the United Nations on long-term arms monitoring and expected further concessions.

Many parties think Iraq "has agreed to comply with future monitoring," the government newspaper Al Jumhouriyah said in a front-page editorial.

"This saying inaccurate and wrong," the paper said, making clear that Baghdad is not ready to unconditionally accept U.N. monitoring of its weapons banned under terms of the Gulf war ceasefire.

"Iraq has expressed preparedness to comply with a general perspective," it added.

Iraq said last week it was ready to comply with Security Council Resolution 715 on long-term weapons monitoring but expected concessions in return.

The deal was struck to end a confrontation which threatened to escalate to military action over Iraq's refusal to let the U.N. install monitoring cameras at two missile-testing sites near Baghdad.

U.N. inspectors this week installed three of the cameras, but they will not be switched on until further talks have taken place.

"Among the most outstanding facts that have to be stated now is that there exists a clear difference between agreeing to future monitoring and expressing readiness to honour Resolution 715," the Iraqi paper said.

It said a position paper Iraq had submitted to senior U.N. official Rolf Ekeus during his Baghdad visit which defused the crisis over cameras monitoring should be viewed as part of a "package deal" committing both the Security Council and Baghdad to hon-

our mutual obligations.

"The central concept in Iraq's readiness to comply with 715 is that honouring of obligations is not only the responsibility of one party, Iraq," Al Jumhouriyah said.

U.N. inspectors this week installed three of the cameras, but they will not be switched on until further talks have taken place.

Another team of U.N. inspectors said more work needed to be done to install surveillance cameras at two Iraqi missile test sites and declined to spell out the reason for the apparent delay.

He said such plans could not be implemented before Iraq and the U.N. agreed on how future monitoring should be conducted.

He said Iraq had pledged to open secret files on its arms supply network but has not said when.

Mr. Zifferero said he had received assurances the files would be open from Human Abdul Khalil Abdul Ghafuris.

minister of higher education and scientific research.

But Mr. Zifferero, who heads a team of U.N. inspectors which arrived in Baghdad Friday primarily to prepare for removal of Iraq's remaining stocks of irradiated-uranium fuel, said the minister had not set a specific time for opening the files.

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